SUKEDACHI NINE

助太刀

SEISHI KISHIMOTO PRESENTS

岸本聖史

2

SUKEDACHI NINE
助太刀09

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Penal Code Article 11.2
"Death by Retaliation"

1) The death row inmate shall, during the duel, be executed in the same manner in which their victim was killed.

2) After strict review, the victim's family's request for execution will be carried out by an Enforcer of the Special Administrative Police.

3) If the inmate fells the Enforcer during the duel, their execution by retaliation expires, and they are given 3 years' amnesty and the right to be euthanized.

KOUTA KIYODERA (AGE 21)

ASSISTOR NO. 9

HE IS BLESSED WITH A FIT PHYSIQUE, TOP-NOTCH EYESIGHT AND REFLEXES. HIS ABILITIES ARE SAID TO BE ON PAR WITH THE BEST ATHLETES. HOWEVER, HIS SIMPLISTIC PERSONALITY PREVENTS FULL UTILIZATION OF THOSE TALENTS. HE CAN BE MORE EMPATHIC TO VICTIMS THAN YUUJI AT TIMES, THANKS TO HIS SELF-HONESTY AND HIS RECEPTIVENESS TO OTHERS.

KOUTA KIYODERA

RYOKO KOIZUMI (AGE 23)

ASSISTOR NO. 8

THE LONE SURVIVOR OF THE AA INCIDENT, IN WHICH THE INSTIGATOR MURDERED SCORES OF HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS IN SEARCH OF AN ANGEL WHO COULD PURIFY HIS TAINTED SOUL. DUE TO THAT EXPERIENCE, SHE'S COME TO HARBOR A DEEP RESENTMENT TOWARDS MEN. SHE CAN FREELY DISLOCATE HER JOINTS AND CONTORT HER BODY AS NEEDED.

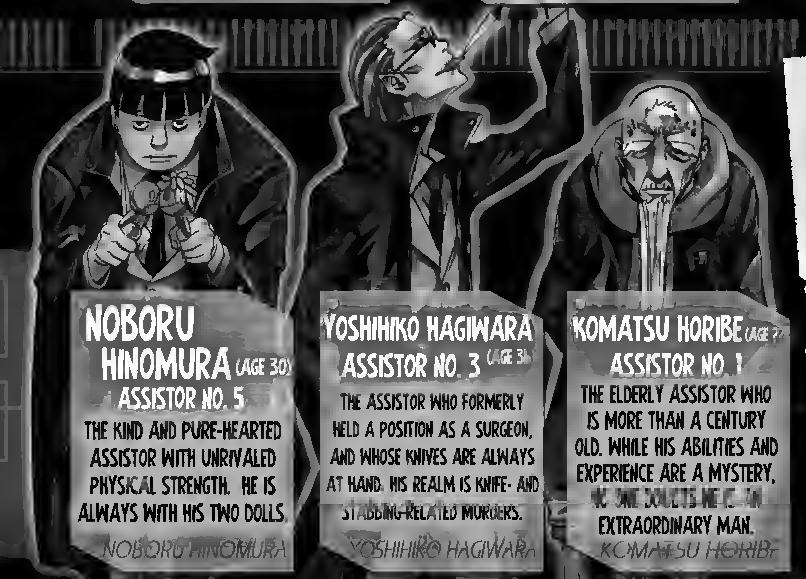
RYOKO KOIZUMI

YUUJI YAMAGISHI (AGE 24)

ASSISTOR NO. 7

A YOUNG ASSISTOR WHO HARBORS A DEEP HATRED TOWARDS CRIME AND A DEEP SYMPATHY TOWARDS VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES. DESPITE LEADING AN EASYGOING EXISTENCE, HE IS A WORRYWART WITH A TENDENCY TO COMPARE EVERYTHING BECAUSE OF A CERTAIN INCIDENT IN HIS YOUTH. HE LOST HIS FATHER AND BROTHER, BOTH HIS ARMS AND HIS LEGS, AND ANY SENSATION OF PAIN IN HIS NEW LIMBS.

YUUJI YAMAGISHI



NOBORU HINOMURA (AGE 30)

ASSISTOR NO. 5

THE KIND AND PURE-HEARTED ASSISTOR WITH UNRIVALED PHYSICAL STRENGTH. HE IS ALWAYS WITH HIS TWO DOLLS.

NOBORU HINOMURA

YOSHIHIKO HAGIWARA (AGE 31)

ASSISTOR NO. 3

THE ASSISTOR WHO FORMERLY HELD A POSITION AS A SURGEON, AND WHOSE KNIVES ARE ALWAYS AT HAND. HIS REALM IS KNIFE- AND STABBING-RELATED MURDERS.

YOSHIHIKO HAGIWARA

KOMATSU HORIBE (AGE ?)

ASSISTOR NO. 1

THE ELDERLY ASSISTOR WHO IS MORE THAN A CENTURY OLD. WHILE HIS ABILITIES AND EXPERIENCE ARE A MYSTERY, NO ONE DOUBTS HE IS AN EXTRAORDINARY MAN.

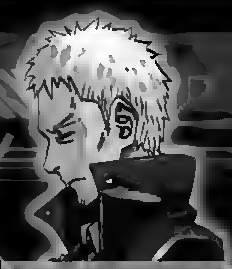
KOMATSU HORIBE

JOURNALIST

HARUKA YANASE

NAME	HARUKA YANASE (AGE 24)

A COLLEGE FRIEND OF YUUJI, WHO FREQUENTLY MEETS WITH HIM IN PRIVATE FOR BETTER OR WORSE. SHE HARBORS DOUBTS ABOUT THE DEATH BY RETALIATION LAW AND ITS EXECUTION SYSTEM, AND CENTERS HER INTERVIEWS AROUND THOSE TOPICS. A CHEERFUL WOMAN FROM THE KANSAI REGION.



KAZUNARI SAKURADA
ASSISTOR NO. 2 (AGE 44)

AN ASSISTOR WHO SERVES AS A SECOND-IN-COMMAND TO THE TEAM, AND SOMEONE WHO "GETS" YUUJI. HE'S GENTLE AND LOW-KEY, BUT APPROACHES HIS ASSISTOR DUTIES WITH CONVICTION, RISKING HIS LIFE TO SEE THINGS THROUGH.

KAZUNARI SAKURADA

KYOUGEN CHIKAMATSU
ASSISTOR NO. 4 (AGE ??)

A MASKED MYSTERY POSING AS A MAN IN CONSTANT SLUMBER. THEY SAY NO ASSISTOR HAS SEEN HIS REAL FACE...

KYOGEN CHIKAMATSU

KAMUI ODA (AGE 50)
ASSISTOR NO. 5

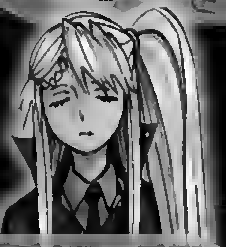
THE LEADER WHO FOUNDED THE SPECIAL TASK FORCE "ASSISTORS" AFTER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DEATH BY RETALIATION ACT. HE HAS A PAST AS A MERCENARY, ALTHOUGH DETAILS REMAIN SPARSE. NO ONE KNOWS WHETHER THE SCARS THAT COVER HIS BODY ARE FROM THE BATTLEFIELDS HE FOUGHT IN, OR FROM BEFORE OR AFTER THAT ERA... HE IS A MAN SHROUDED IN MYSTERY

KAMUI ODA

KENJI OKUMURA (AGE 45)

TOKYO METROPOLITAN POLICE, ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT. DESPITE STANDING IN THE UPPER ECHELON OF LAW ENFORCEMENT, HE CHOSE TO JOIN FORCES WITH AN OUTLIER LIKE ODA TO ESTABLISH THE DEATH BY RETALIATION ACT. HE BELIEVES THE ACT WILL DETER CRIME AND HELP REVERSE POPULATION DECLINE.

KENJI OKUMURA



YUKI NAKATANI
ASSISTOR NO. 6 (AGE 25)

DESPITE BEING BORN BLIND, HER SENSE OF HEARING AND SMELL ARE TOP-NOTCH; SHE CAN GRASP SPATIAL RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH SOUND WAVES AROUND HER, AND RECOGNIZE INDIVIDUALS FROM THEIR UNIQUE SCENT. A WOMAN WITH A VERY INNOCENT, GIRLISH PERSONALITY.

YUKI NAKATANI

JAPAN'S POPULATION DECLINE CONTINUES INTO THE NEAR FUTURE, THANKS TO FALLING BIRTH RATES AND THE AGING OF THE GENERAL POPULACE. AMID THIS, THE GOVERNMENT GRAPPLES WITH THE SERIOUSNESS OF A STEADY INCREASE OF VIOLENT CRIME. TO COMBAT THIS, THEY REVIVE THE "DEATH BY RETALIATION" SYSTEM, WHICH HAD EXISTED UP TO THE MEIJI ERA. IT IS DESIGNED TO EXORCISE FEELINGS OF HATRED AND VENGEANCE FROM VICTIMS OF CRIME AND THEIR FAMILIES.

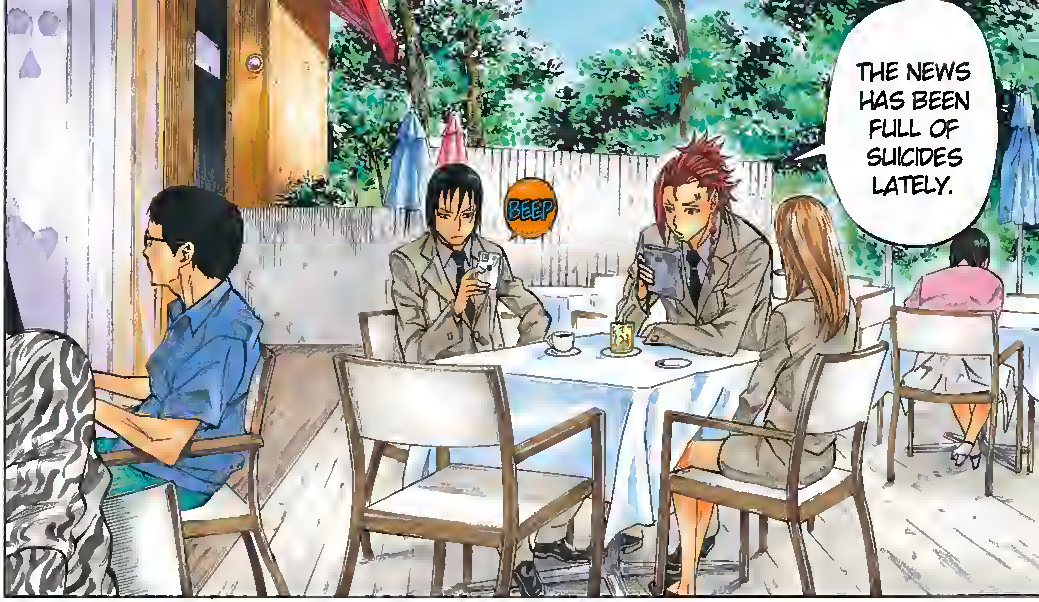
"DEATH BY RETALIATION" SEEKS TO PUNISH VIOLENT CRIMINALS BY EXECUTING THEM IN THE EXACT MANNER IN WHICH THEY MURDERED THEIR VICTIMS; AS IT IS AN EXTREMELY DANGEROUS METHOD OF EXECUTION, A TEAM OF SPECIALISTS WAS CREATED TO CARRY THESE OUT AS PROXIES FOR THE DECEASED AND THEIR FAMILIES. THEY ARE KNOWN AS THE SPECIAL TASK FORCE OF THE SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE POLICE - THE "ASSISTORS."

HARBORING DOUBTS TOWARDS THE DEATH BY RETALIATION SYSTEM, JOURNALIST HARUKA SOUGHT INTERVIEWS NOT ONLY FROM VICTIMS, BUT ALSO FROM THOSE CONDEMNED TO DEATH THROUGH THIS SYSTEM AND THEIR FAMILIES. BUT AT ONE INTERVIEW, SHE WAKES UP TO FIND...

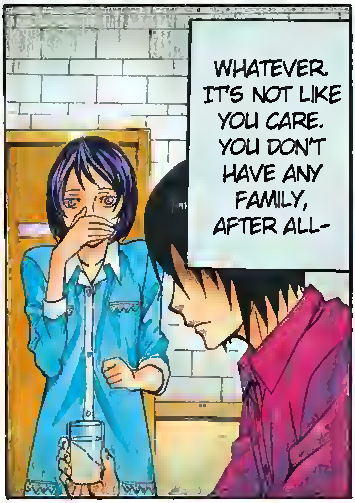
PROLOGUE

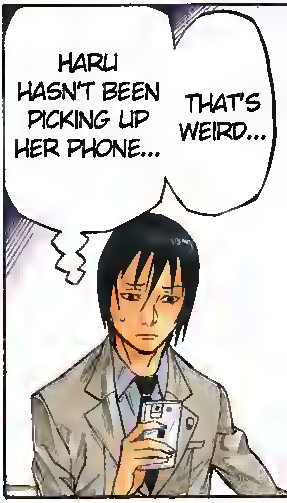
SUKEDACHI NINE
助太刀09

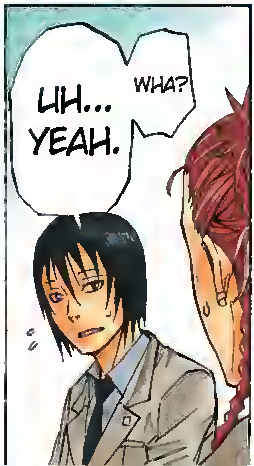
MIRROR:6 "HARU"

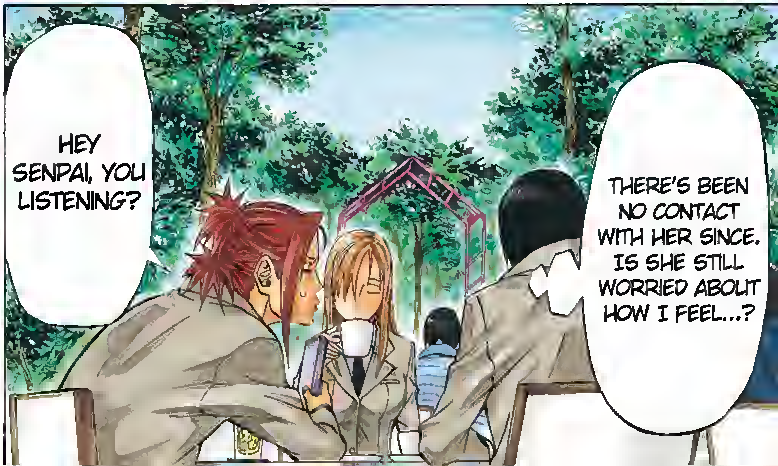

THE NEWS HAS BEEN FULL OF SUICIDES LATELY.
BEEP

I... THAT WAS OUT OF LINE.


WHATEVER. IT'S NOT LIKE YOU CARE. YOU DON'T HAVE ANY FAMILY, AFTER ALL-


HARU HASN'T BEEN PICKING UP HER PHONE...
THAT'S WEIRD...


WHA?
UH... YEAH.

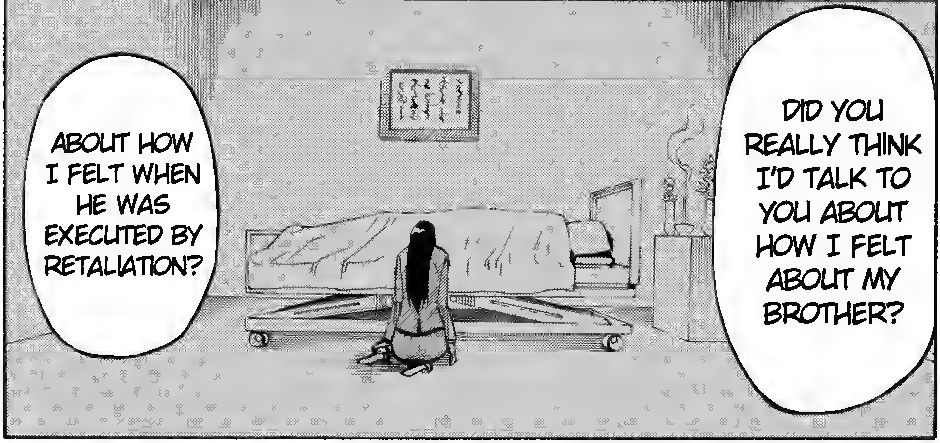

HEY SENPAI, YOU LISTENING?
THERE'S BEEN NO CONTACT WITH HER SINCE. IS SHE STILL WORRIED ABOUT HOW I FEEL...?

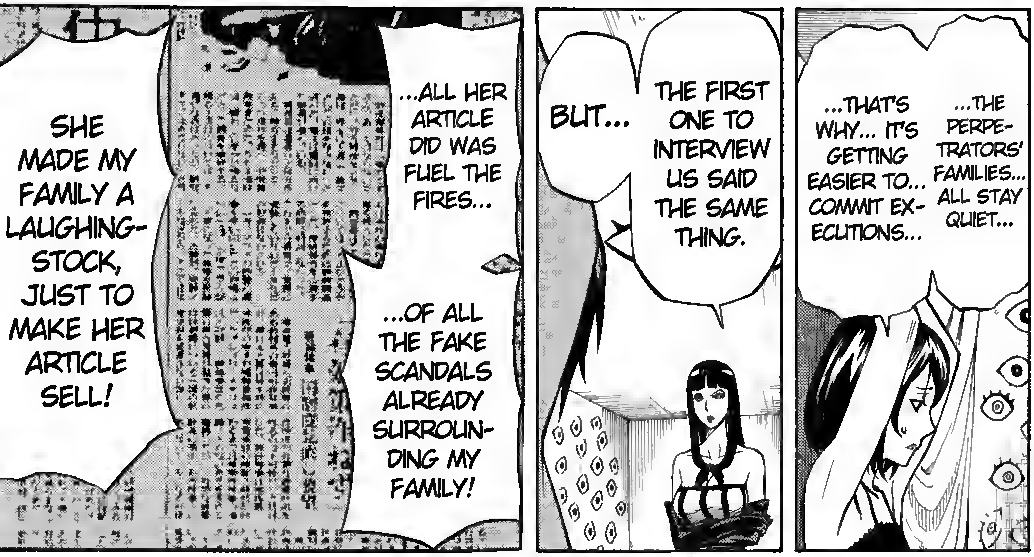
I JUST CAN'T GET IN TOUCH WITH THIS REALLY MOUTHY COLLEGE FRIEND OF MINE.
Haruka Yanase
柳瀬春香
WHAT DOES SHE DO?
I DON'T HAVE A GIRL-FRIEND!
DID YOU GET IN A ROW WITH YOUR GIRL-FRIEND?
SHE'S A... VERY PASSIONATE JOURNALIST.
SLURP
ズズ
PASSIONATE ABOUT THE DEATH BY RETALIATION SYSTEM, ANYWAY.
WAUGH!
ドン
CRUSH
WHAT?!
アノ
SPOOT
LIKE THIS ONE?! "FEMALE JOURNALIST CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS ABOUT DEATH BY RETALIA-TION..."
"IS SUICIDE BEHIND HER DEATH?!"

—AANG
GL—
YOU THERE! JOIN THE COMEDY CLUB!
DUDE, COLLEGE BASEBALL'S ON A TOTALLY DIFFERENT LEVEL!
FYEWWW
THE MASS MEDIA CLUB LOOKS LIKE MY BEST PICK.
HOLY CRAP, THAT BALL'S HEADED STRAIGHT FOR HER!!
HEY YOU, LOOK OUT!!
WHA? WHAT'RE THEY--
SPAK
ALIGH !!

HEY, YOU OKAY?
!
DID HE JUST CATCH THAT WITH HIS BARE HAND?!
DANG...
OH... MY... GOD...
UM...
...THANK YOU.
...UHH...
HOW 'BOUT YOU? HOW'S YOUR HAND?
PAT
パン
パン
PAT
HUH?
I'M...
OH, ME?

YUUJI...
HNN.
...YUUJI...
YOU CHOSE THIS TURN OF EVENTS, GIRL.
YOU'RE IN A LOCKED BASEMENT ROOM. NO ONE WILL COME, EVEN AS YOU CRY FOR HELP.
IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF YOUR JOB...
...EATING AWAY AT EVERYONE'S PRIVACY...
YOU'RE ALL A BUNCH OF PARASITES...
...BECAUSE YOU ARE A JOURNALIST!


DID YOU REALLY THINK I'D TALK TO YOU ABOUT HOW I FELT ABOUT MY BROTHER?
ABOUT HOW I FELT WHEN HE WAS EXECUTED BY RETALIATION?


...THE PERPE-TRATORS' FAMILIES... ALL STAY QUIET...
...THAT'S WHY... IT'S GETTING EASIER TO... COMMIT EX-ECUTIONS...
THE FIRST ONE TO INTERVIEW US SAID THE SAME THING.
BUT...
...ALL HER ARTICLE DID WAS FUEL THE FIRES...
...OF ALL THE FAKE SCANDALS ALREADY SURROUN-DING MY FAMILY!
SHE MADE MY FAMILY A LAUGHING-STOCK, JUST TO MAKE HER ARTICLE SELL!

...MY MOTHER WAS ALREADY SUFFERING OVER MY BROTHER'S SENTENCE...
...AND THAT ARTICLE...
...DROVE HER OVER THE EDGE !!
RIGHT OFF THE SEVENTH FLOOR TOWARDS HER OWN DEATH!

...JUST TO BROADCAST THEIR OWN VOICE.
THEY'LL USE ANYONE TO PROMOTE THEM-SELVES...
SURE THEY AREN'T.
NOT ALL JOURNAL-ISTS ARE LIKE THAT!
...IT SERVES YOUR OWN PURPOSES?
DON'T YOU SAY THAT BECAUSE...
JOURNAL-ISTS ARE HERE TO RIGHT THE WRONGS IN THIS WORLD!
YOU'RE WRONG !!
SPLIP
...THAT THEY COMMITTED SUICIDE.
THAT'S WHY I HAD THOSE JOURNALISTS EXECUTED IN RETALIATION.
JUST LIKE MY MOTHER, I MADE SURE...
.....

HELP!!
PRICK
YUUJI...
DEAD WOMEN TELL NO TALES, HONEY.
IT'S YOU! YOU WERE BEHIND ALL THOSE JOURNALIST SUICIDES!!
WHAT NOW?! ...TH-THE DOOR?!
CRAAACK
CRICK
SCREEE...
LIKE, I, SAID... NO ONE'S GONNA HELP YOU NOW...

...BUT I LET MYSELF IN ANYWAY.
THE DOOR WAS LOCKED...
EEEE...
イイ！
CRUMBLE
CRUMBLE
CRUMBLE

...REIKO HIRUGUCHI.
...IT'S A DAMN SHAME...
THANKS TO YOU, I HAVE ALL THE EVIDENCE I NEED.

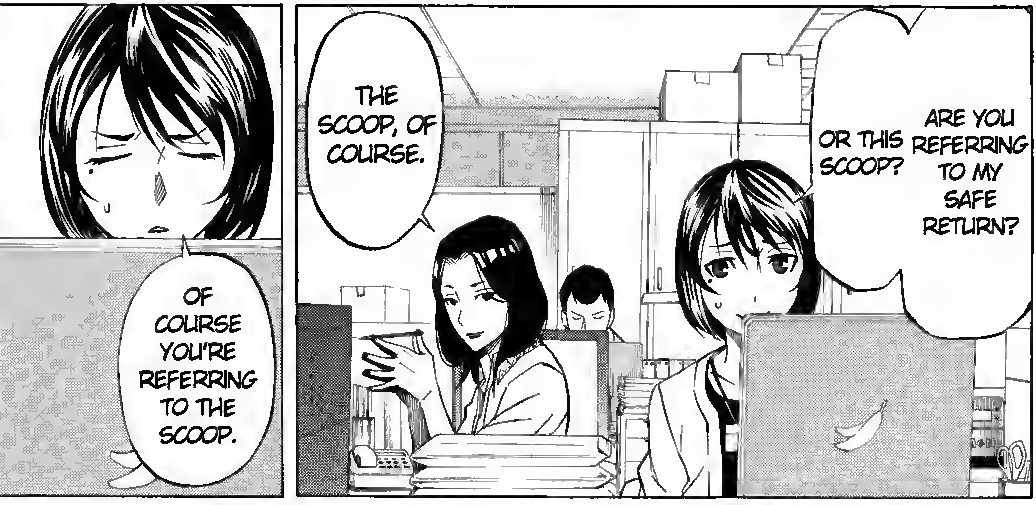
ANSWER ME!!
HOW THE HELL DID HE BREAK THE DOOR?!
WH-WHO ARE YOU?!
...TO SAVE BOTH THE FAMILIES OF VICTIMS AND PERPETRATORS ALIKE.
...AN AGENT WHO SIMPLY WANTS...
FWOO
GRAB
!!
AN ASSIS-TOR?!
YOU'RE AN ASSIS-TOR?!
WAIT A MINUTE...

HNNNG! FREE AT LAST!
SORRY TO TAKE UP SO MUCH OF YOUR TIME, MA'AM.
You like playing hide and seek, mister?
LEER
UH OH...
!
I REALLY DIDN'T DO MUCH...
ERR...
THANK YOU FOR SAVING MY HIDE BACK THERE...
...MISTER ASSIS-TOR!!

...THE MORE THINGS DON'T SEEM RIGHT.
IN ANY CASE, THE MORE RESEARCH I DO...
...GATHERING MATERIALS ABOUT THE DEATH BY RETALIATION SYSTEM!
DESPITE MY YOUTH AND INEXPERIENCE, I'M STILL A GUNG-HO JOURNALIST...
THERE'S NO FOOLING ME AT THIS POINT!
HMPH
...I CAN'T SAY ANYTHING WITHOUT A SPECIAL INTERVIEW PERMIT.
SORRY MISS, BUT IF IT'S ABOUT THE ASSISTORS...
ERK
...WITHOUT RUSHING TO SAVE ME FIRST?
SO YOU USED ME AS BAIT TO LURE OUT A CONFESSION...
This'll make a juicy li'l article...
...C'MON, MISTER.
IT'S NOT THAT EASY, MISS.

EVEN AFTER YOU'VE GONE THROUGH ALL THAT ABUSE...
...YOU JUST WON'T LET UP, WILL YOU?
WELL, SIR..
I AM A JOURNAL-IST!
HEH HEH... I LIKE YOU.
STILL THOUGH, IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO GET THE CLEARANCE YOU NEED.
.....
...WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
...IS THAT SO?
GUESS I'LL HAVE TO WAGE MY BATTLE WITH THAT "JUICY LI'L ARTICLE" AFTER ALL...
HARUKA YANASE, SIR.
THAT'S A GOOD NAME.
I LOOK FORWARD TO WHAT YOU HAVE TO WRITE.

GREAT GOING, HARU.
SCOOP
THE TRAGEDY BORN AS RETALIATION BEGETS RETALIATION!!
THE TRUTH AS THE SUSPECT HIRUGUCHI TELLS IT
JOURNALIST SUICIDES REVEALED TO BE HOMICIDES
THE
FORBIDDEN TRUTH—
-Co.
社
Sakuratobi Publishing Co.
桜桃出版社


OF COURSE YOU'RE REFERRING TO THE SCOOP.
THE SCOOP, OF COURSE.
ARE YOU REFERRING TO MY SAFE RETURN?
OR THIS SCOOP?

STILL... WHAT A WASTE, I SAY.
A VERY HARU-LIKE RE-SPONSE.
HOW COULD SOMEONE WORKING AS AN ASSISTOR BE MY TYPE OF GUY?
DID YOU FALL FOR HIM?
IS HE A CATCH?
SO... THIS HANDSOME PRINCE ASSISTOR WHO SAVED YOU FROM CERTAIN DOOM...
WHAT'S HE LIKE?

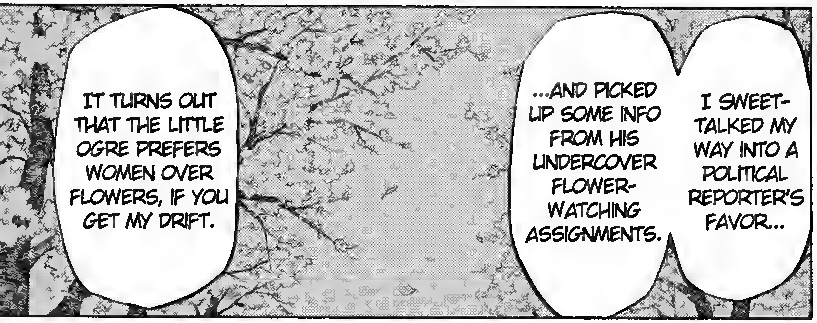
NUDGE
IF IT WERE ME, I'D MAKE HIM MY LOVER...
...AND THEN MAKE HIM SPILL OUT ALL SORTS OF THINGS.
IT'S THE PERFECT CHANCE TO GET A HUGE SCOOP!♥
.....
... CHASING DOWN BIG STORIES FIRST...
...ISN'T THE ONLY THING OUR JOBS ARE ABOUT.
YEAH, YEAH.
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO CHANGE THE WORLD WITH OUR STORIES...
IS THAT RIGHT?
I THINK THIS WHOLE INCIDENT BEGAN BECAUSE OF SOME HEARTLESS AFTER-REPORTING OF A RETALIATORY EXECUTION.
THE ARTICLES PUBLISHED POST-EXECUTION ONLY SERVED TO SCAR THE ACCUSED EVEN FURTHER.
Nライン
N LINE
Minister of Justice Onizuka
!

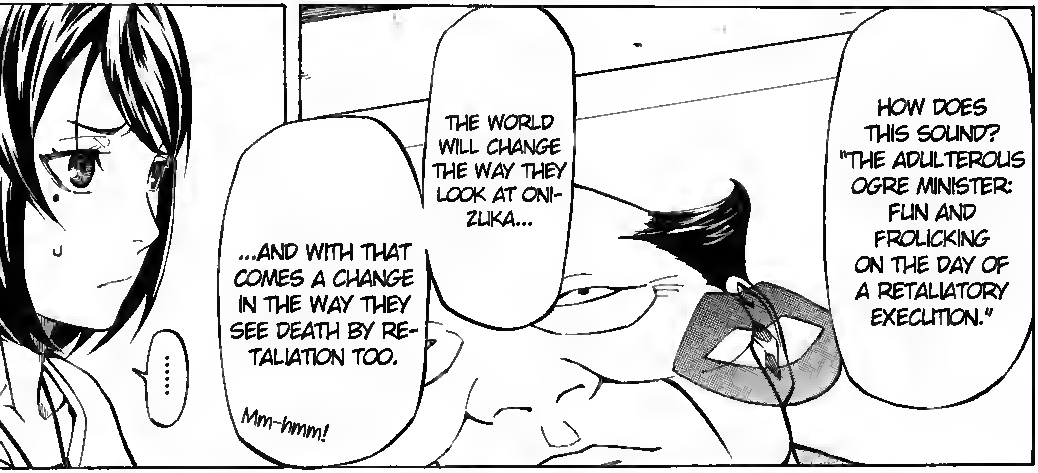
HEY, THAT'S HARU'S ARTICLE !!
DESPITE ALL THIS, JOURNALISTS STILL PUBLISH ARTICLES THAT COMPLETELY MISS THE POINT.
ARTICLES THAT CLAIM THAT "RETALIATION BEGETS RETALIATION"...
GUYS LIKE HIM WHO LOOK DOWN ON JOURNALISTS REALLY PISS ME OFF.
HEY... DON'T LET IT GET TO YOU, KID.
IT'S NOT ABOUT THE ARTICLE.
IT'S...
IT BOTHERS ME THAT AS LONG AS ONIZUKA IS IN A POSITION TO APPROVE EVERY RETALIATORY EXECUTION...
...THOSE EXECUTIONS WILL CONTINUE BEFORE WE CAN EVEN RAISE A REAL DISCUSSION ON THE ISSUE.

I'M SAYING, LET'S TAKE AWAY THAT FAT LITTLE OGRE'S IRON STICK!
TEAM UP?
...THEN LET'S TEAM UP, SHALL WE?
!!?
YOU MEAN--
LET'S CAUSE A SCANDAL.
!
A... SCAN-DAL?
SURE... OF THE "FLIRTATIOUS MINISTER" KIND.

IF THERE'S NO TRUTH THAT CAN CHANGE THE WORLD...
SQUEEK
...THEN WE'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE ONE UP.

WHERE ARE WE GONNA FIND A SCANDAL LIKE THAT ?!

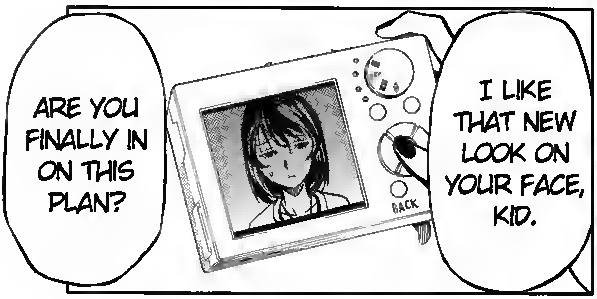

I SWEET-TALKED MY WAY INTO A POLITICAL REPORTER'S FAVOR...
...AND PICKED UP SOME INFO FROM HIS UNDERCOVER FLOWER-WATCHING ASSIGNMENTS.
IT TURNS OUT THAT THE LITTLE OGRE PREFERS WOMEN OVER FLOWERS, IF YOU GET MY DRIFT.


HOW DOES THIS SOUND? "THE ADULTEROUS OGRE MINISTER: FUN AND FROLICKING ON THE DAY OF A RETALIATORY EXECUTION."
THE WORLD WILL CHANGE THE WAY THEY LOOK AT ONI-ZUKA...
...AND WITH THAT COMES A CHANGE IN THE WAY THEY SEE DEATH BY RETALIATION TOO.
Mm-hmm!
.....

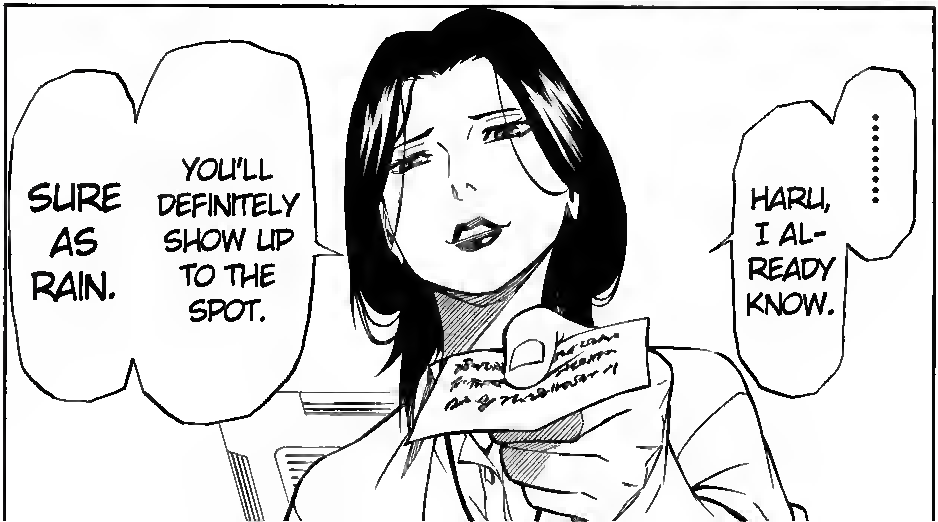
TERRIBLE?

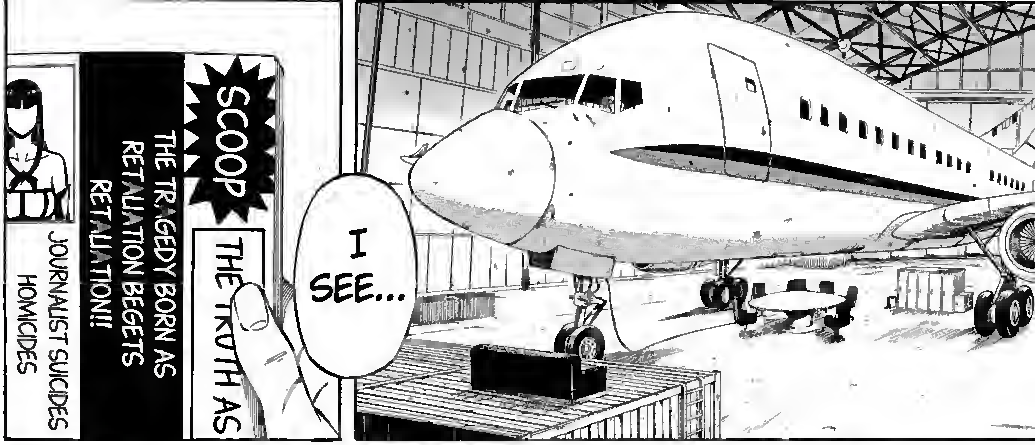
...BUT THAT'S A COMPLETE AND TOTAL LIE.
THAT'S JUST...

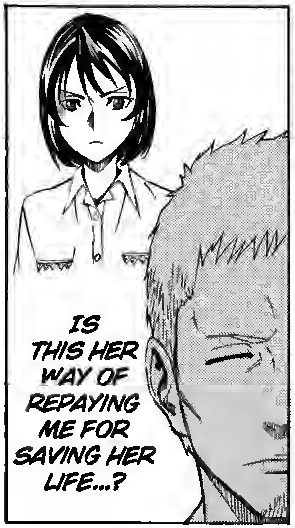
WE'LL SEE WHICH SIDE COMES OUT ON TOP!
KA-CHAK
...WE'RE JUST THE TRIGGERS OF THE GUNS THAT WILL CHANGE THE WORLD.
EXCEPT...
READERS DETERMINE WHAT IS THE TRUTH AND WHAT ARE LIES, HONEY.
SHFF...
...IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE I'LL GET PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW A REAL ASSISTOR...
.....
.....
DO YOU HAVE ANY BETTER IDEAS?

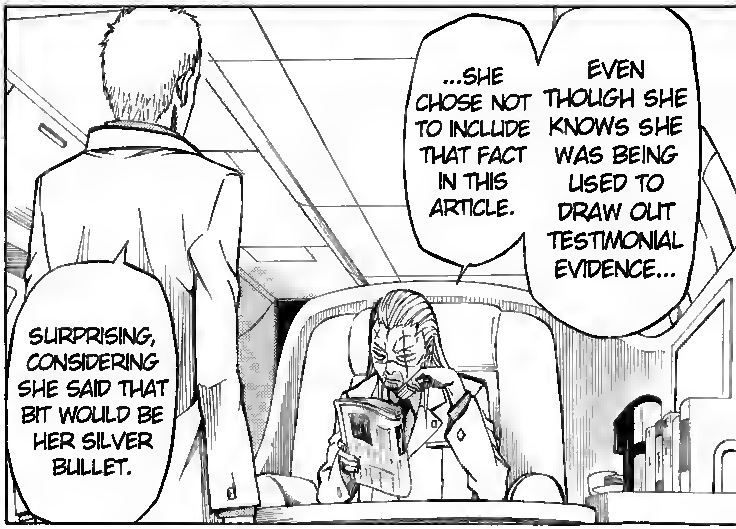

ARE YOU FINALLY IN ON THIS PLAN?
I LIKE THAT NEW LOOK ON YOUR FACE, KID.
BACK

I DIDN'T SAY I'D SIGN ON TO THIS YET!!
HAVE A COPY.
ALL THE DETAILS ARE WRITTEN ON THIS NOTE. THE PLAN ITSELF, WHERE, AND WHEN.

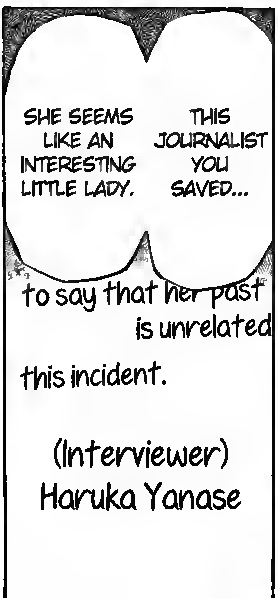

SURE AS RAIN.
YOU'LL DEFINITELY SHOW UP TO THE SPOT.
HARU, I ALREADY KNOW.
.....

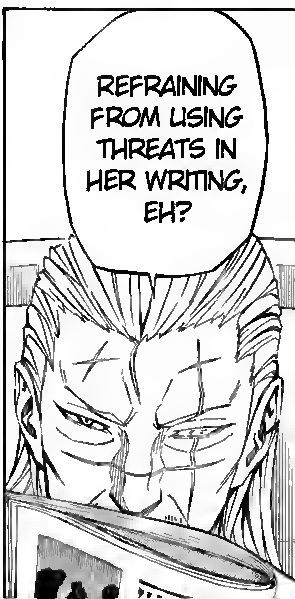

SCOOP
THE TRAGEDY BORN AS RETALIATION BEGETS RETALIATION!!
JOURNALIST SUICIDES
HOMICIDES
THE TRUTH AS
I SEE...


IS THIS HER WAY OF REPAYING ME FOR SAVING HER LIFE...?


SURPRISING, CONSIDERING SHE SAID THAT BIT WOULD BE HER SILVER BULLET.
...SHE CHOSE NOT TO INCLUDE THAT FACT IN THIS ARTICLE.
EVEN THOUGH SHE KNOWS SHE WAS BEING USED TO DRAW OUT TESTIMONIAL EVIDENCE...

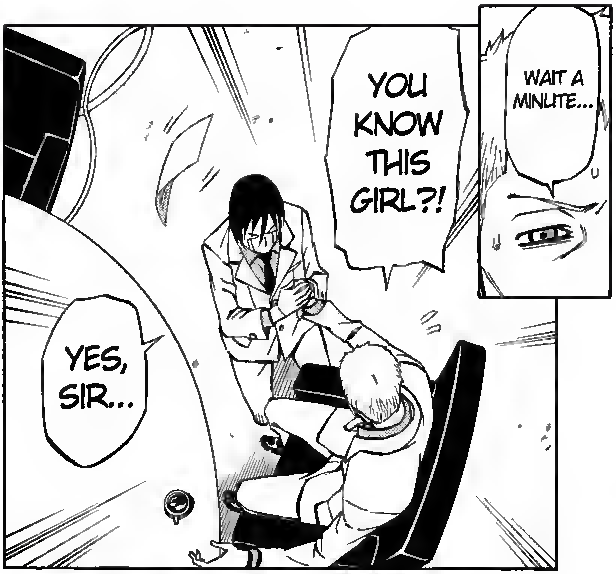
...WHAT DO YOU THINK, CAPTAIN?
I'D LIKE TO SEE WHAT SHE HAS TO SAY IN HER NEXT ARTICLE, BUT...

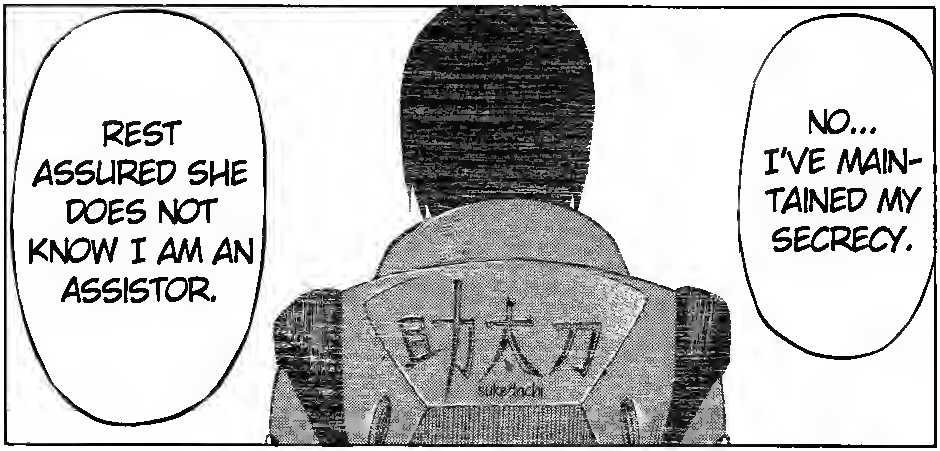

SHE SEEMS LIKE AN INTERESTING LITTLE LADY.
THIS JOURNALIST YOU SAVED...
to say that her past is unrelated this incident.
(Interviewer) Haruka Yanase

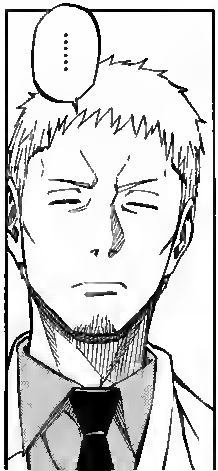

REFRAINING FROM USING THREATS IN HER WRITING, EH?

Assistors
Special Interview P
(Haruka Yanase)
110 FLAP
Special Task Force
Assistors
Special Interview Permit
DO WHAT YOU WANT.
THIS IS WHY SHE HASN'T BEEN PICKING UP HER PHONE!
HARU?!
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
?
THIS IS THE GIRL SAKURA-DA-SAN SAVED?!
OW! WHA-- WHAT'S THE MATTER YUUJI?
SQUEEEZE
THANK YOU SO MUCH, SAKURA-DA-SAN !!

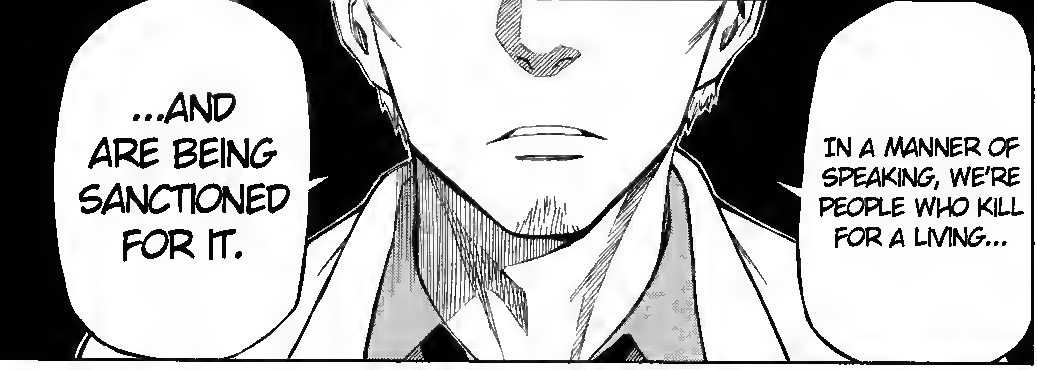
!!
SHE SAID SHE WANTED TO INTERVIEW AN ASSISTOR, BUT...
...DOES SHE KNOW THAT YOU'RE ONE TOO?!
Flutter
Special Task Force
Assistors
Special Interview Permit
(Haruka Yanase)

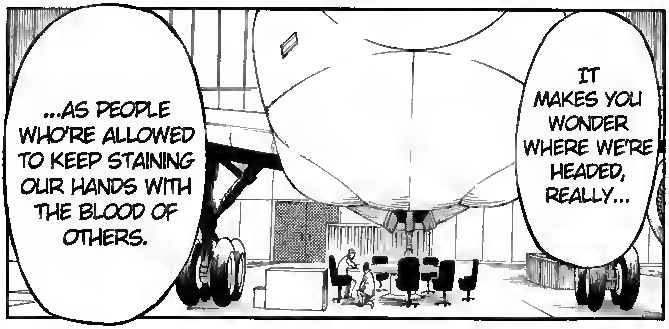

WAIT A MINUTE...
YOU KNOW THIS GIRL?!
YES, SIR...


REST ASSURED SHE DOES NOT KNOW I AM AN ASSISTOR.
NO... I'VE MAINTAINED MY SECRECY.
sukedachi

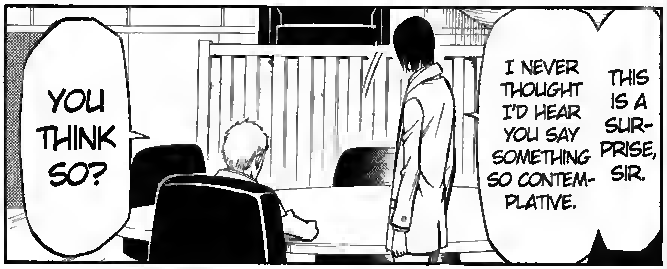

.....

...THANKS TO PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS WHO'RE OPPOSED TO EXECUTIONS BY RETALIATION.
...SHE'D GET DRAWN INTO A GREAT DEAL OF DANGER...
I'M AWARE THAT IF SHE KNEW I DID BUSINESS WITH THE SPECIAL TASK FORCE...


IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING, WE'RE PEOPLE WHO KILL FOR A LIVING...
...AND ARE BEING SANCTIONED FOR IT.

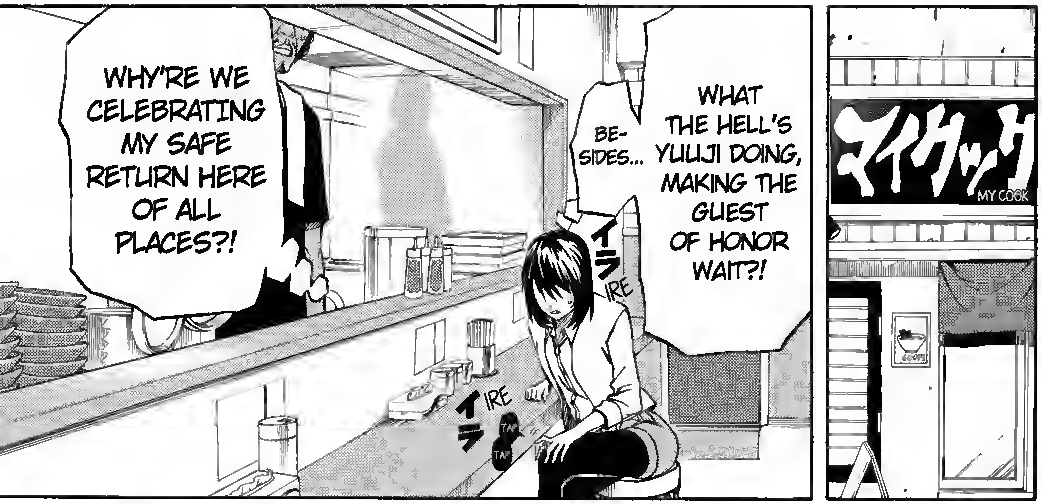

IT MAKES YOU WONDER WHERE WE'RE HEADED, REALLY...
...AS PEOPLE WHO'RE ALLOWED TO KEEP STAINING OUR HANDS WITH THE BLOB OF OTHERS.

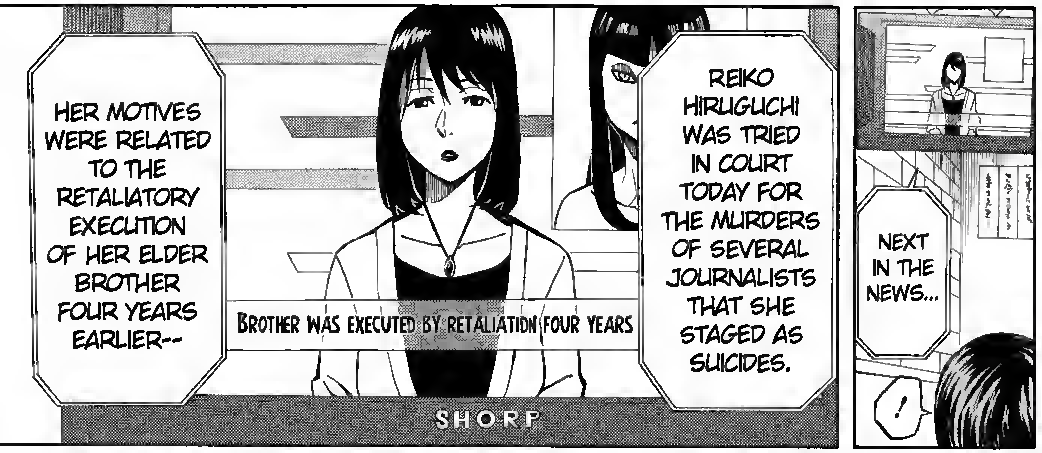
.....

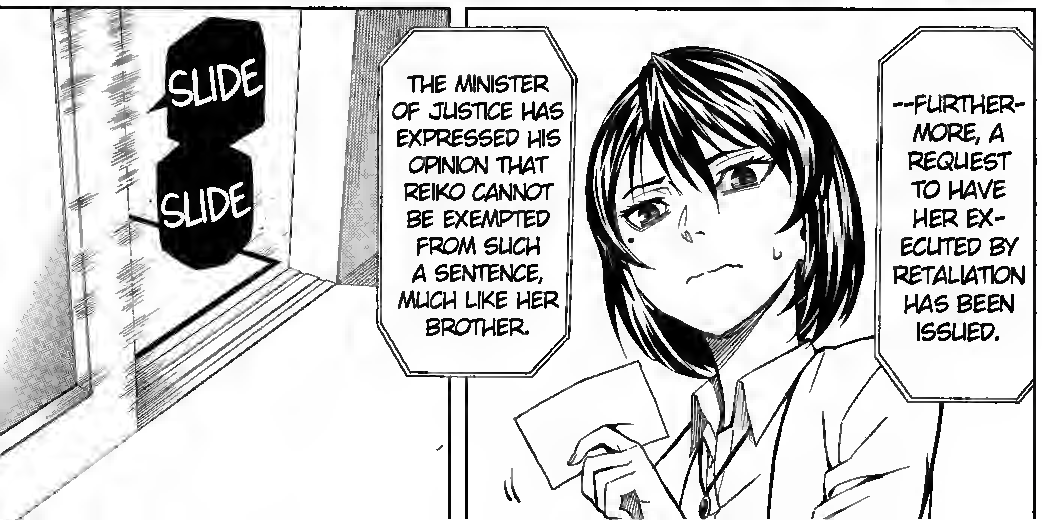

THIS IS A SURPRISE, SIR.
I NEVER THOUGHT I'D HEAR YOU SAY SOMETHING SO CONTEMPLATIVE.
YOU THINK SO?

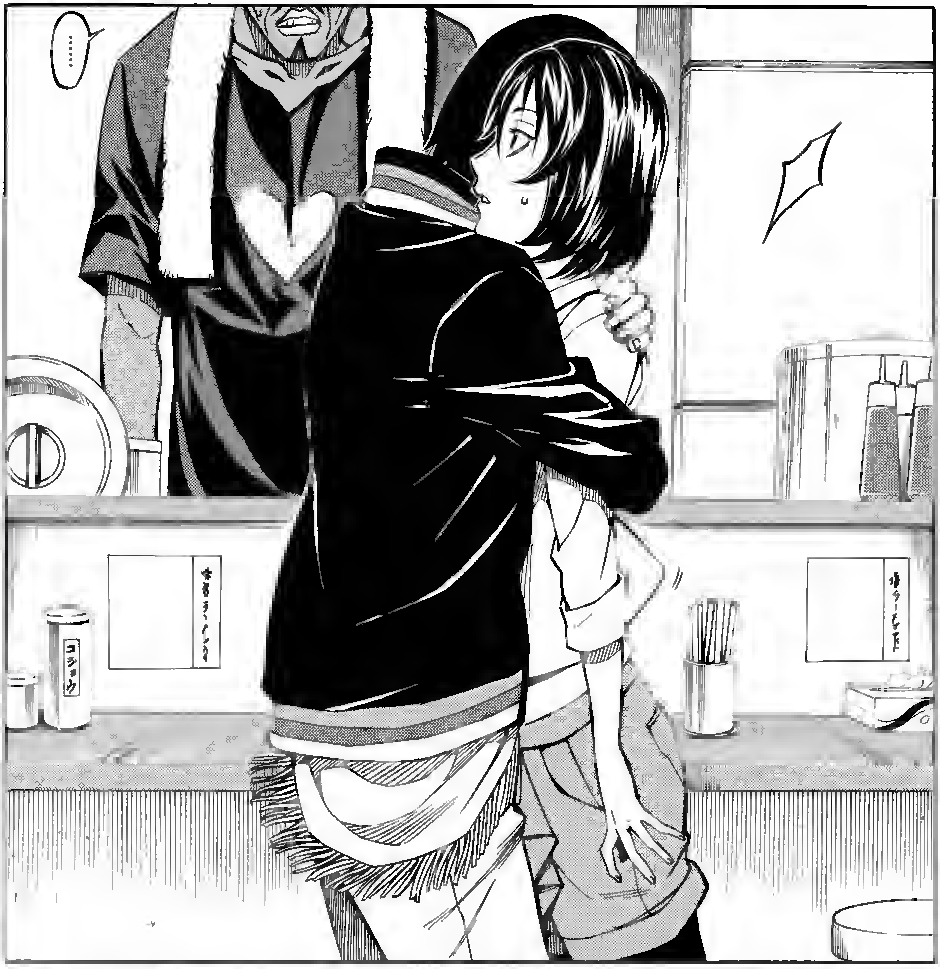
...AS LONG AS THE VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE IN OUR THOUGHTS...
...THEN I BELIEVE THAT AT LEAST OUR HEARTS WON'T BE STAINED WITH THAT BLOOD.

THAT'S A QUOTE FOR THE BOOKS, YUUJI...
.....
I HAVE YOU TO THANK, SIR.
LET ME REPAY YOU SOMEHOW... FOR YOUR TUTELAGE, AND FOR TAKING CARE OF HARU.
BY THE WAY, YOU SHOULD GO VISIT YOUR FRIEND SOON.
YES, SIR!
...I'LL TAKE YOU UP ON THAT OFFER SOME OTHER TIME, THEN.


WHY'RE WE CELEBRATING MY SAFE RETURN HERE OF ALL PLACES?!
BE-SIDES...
WHAT THE HELL'S YUUJI DOING, MAKING THE GUEST OF HONOR WAIT?!
イラ IRE
イラ IRE
TAP
マイクック
MY COOK


HER MOTIVES WERE RELATED TO THE RETALIATORY EXECUTION OF HER ELDER BROTHER FOUR YEARS EARLIER--
BROTHER WAS EXECUTED BY RETALIATION FOUR YEARS
REIKO HIRUGUCHI WAS TRIED IN COURT TODAY FOR THE MURDERS OF SEVERAL JOURNALISTS THAT SHE STAGED AS SUICIDES.
NEXT IN THE NEWS...
!
SHORT


SLIDE
SLIDE
THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE HAS EXPRESSED HIS OPINION THAT REIKO CANNOT BE EXEMPTED FROM SUCH A SENTENCE, MUCH LIKE HER BROTHER.
--FURTHER-MORE, A REQUEST TO HAVE HER EX-ECUTED BY RETALIATION HAS BEEN ISSUED.


……

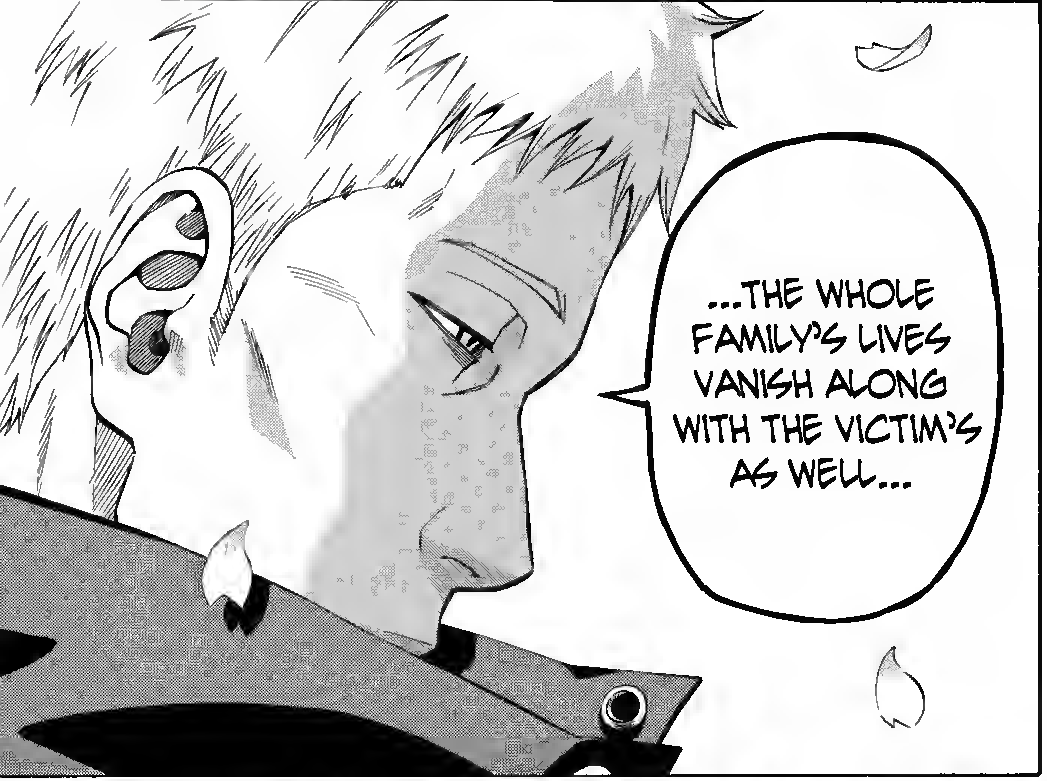
WHA—
THANK GOD YOU'RE ALL RIGHT...

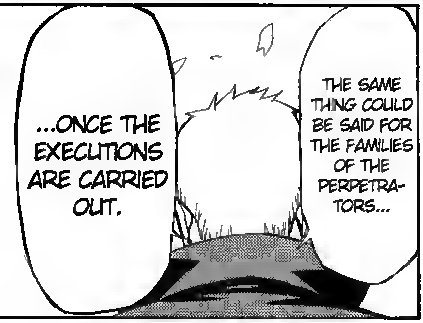
DON'T BREAK MY STUFF NOW, Y'HEAR?
マイクック らーめん
My Cook Ramen
HURK !!
ドン
POW
WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA, YOU CREEP?!
Side dishes つまみ 500円
Ramen ラーメン 700
500 yen~700 yen
WHY'M I CRY-ING...?
HUH?
!?
PLOP

BRIING
HH, HARU ...?
WHA-AAT?!
YOU CAN MAKE UP FOR THAT SUDDEN EM-BRACE...
...BY TREATING ME TO A FAR MORE LUXURIOUS PLACE THAN THIS JOINT!
SORRY, IT'S FROM WORK.
BEEP
LET'S CELEB-RATE SOME OTHER TIME.
HUH ?!
.....
SLAM

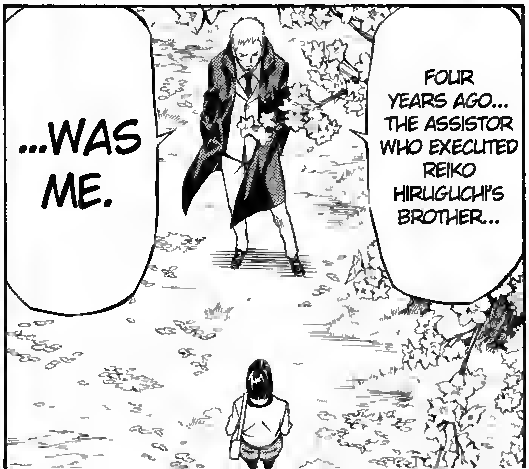
SEEMS I OWE YOU ONE FOR THAT ARTICLE.
I'LL WAGE BATTLE WITH MY ARTICLES!
...SO WHY DIDN'T YOU?
YOU HONESTLY COULD HAVE PUBLISHED THE TRUTH...
I TOLD YOU AL-READY.
GO EASY ON ME, OKAY?
I GET IT. A STRATEGIC APPROACH...
YOU REALLY ARE AN INTERESTING LADY.

WHAT DO THE ASSISTORS THINK ABOUT THIS ISSUE?
...IS BASED ON WHETHER OR NOT A VICTIM LEAVES BEHIND FAMILY.
EVEN IF TWO MURDERS BEAR THE SAME CRIMINAL WEIGHT, THE POSSIBILITY THAT A RETALIATORY EXECUTION IS CONSIDERED FOR ONE MURDER OVER ANOTHER...
VERY WELL.
BEEP
...THAT YOU CAN'T RESPOND?
OR IS IT...
.....
DO YOU HAVE A RESPONSE?
...WHAT'S WRONG, SIR?
DOESN'T THAT ENSURE EQUALITY FOR ALL?
DO YOU NOT THINK THAT SIMILAR CRIMES SHOULD BE HANDED SIMILAR SENTENCES?
.....
THE LIFE THAT'S SNUFFED OUT IN A MURDER ISN'T JUST THE VICTIM'S...
...THE MORE FAMILY A VICTIM LEAVES BEHIND, THE MORE SORROW IS SUFFERED.


...THE WHOLE FAMILY'S LIVES VANISH ALONG WITH THE VICTIM'S AS WELL...


...ONCE THE EXECUTIONS ARE CARRIED OUT.
THE SAME THING COULD BE SAID FOR THE FAMILIES OF THE PERPETRA-TORS...

THE WHOLE... FAMILY'S... LIVES...
.....


...WAS ME.
FOUR YEARS AGO... THE ASSISTOR WHO EXECUTED REIKO HIRUGUCHI'S BROTHER...

...TO SAVE BOTH THE FAMILIES OF VICTIMS AND PERPET-RATORS ALIKE.
...I AM AN AGENT WHO SIMPLY WANTS...
THAT'S WHY YOU SAID THOSE WORDS...
I WANTED TO SAVE REIKO... THE LAST ONE WHO GOT LEFT BEHIND IN THE VACUUM.
...AND HIS MOTHER COMMITTED SUICIDE SHORTLY THEREAFTER.
...I'M GOING TO EXECUTE REIKO HIRUGUCHI HERSELF.
AND TODAY...
.....
...OF THE ONE YOU WANTED TO SAVE?!
YOU'RE GOING TO STEAL THE VERY LIFE...
WHAT ?!

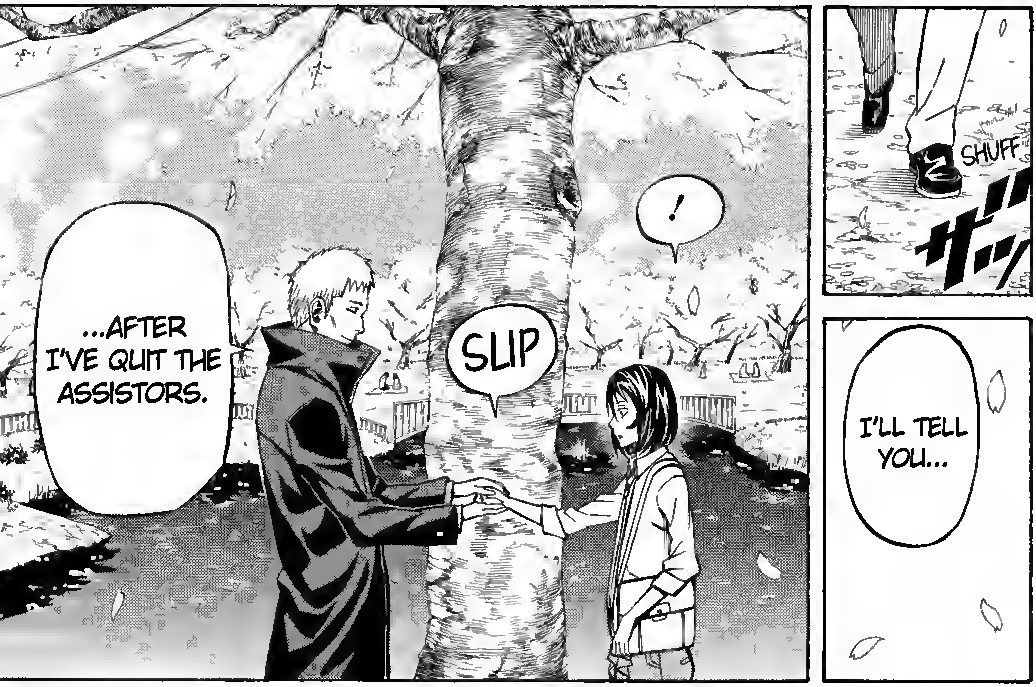
IT'S EASY TO LIE TO YOURSELF AND NOT FACE THE EXECUTIONS.
HOW-EVER...
...DOING SO MAY JUST GIVE BIRTH TO A CHAIN OF MADNESS...
.....
THIS MAKES NO SENSE...
I DON'T GET HOW THE AS-SISTORS THINK AT ALL!!
I CAN'T AGREE WITH THIS SYSTEM ...!
FLAP
...JUST LIKE HOW A FAKE ARTICLE TURNED REIKO HIRUGUCHI INTO A MURDERER.
THAT'S WHY... EVEN IF I STAIN MY HANDS WITH THE BLOOD OF OTHERS...
...FOR THE SAKE OF ALL FAMILIES AFFECTED, I CANNOT RUN FROM MY DUTIES!
GRASP

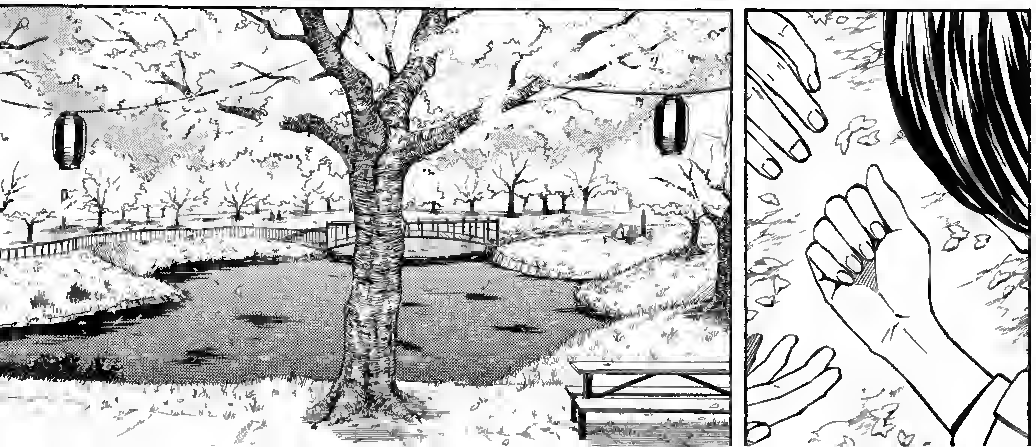
AS AN ASSISTOR...
...THAT IS HOW I FIGHT!
B-BUT THAT TOO MAY ALSO BE A LIE!
...IF I HADN'T SAVED YOU...
...YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN KILLED THEN AND THERE, WITHOUT A DOUBT.
.....
WHEN THAT HAP-PENS...
...WHAT WOULD THOSE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU THINK?
IMAGINE IT...

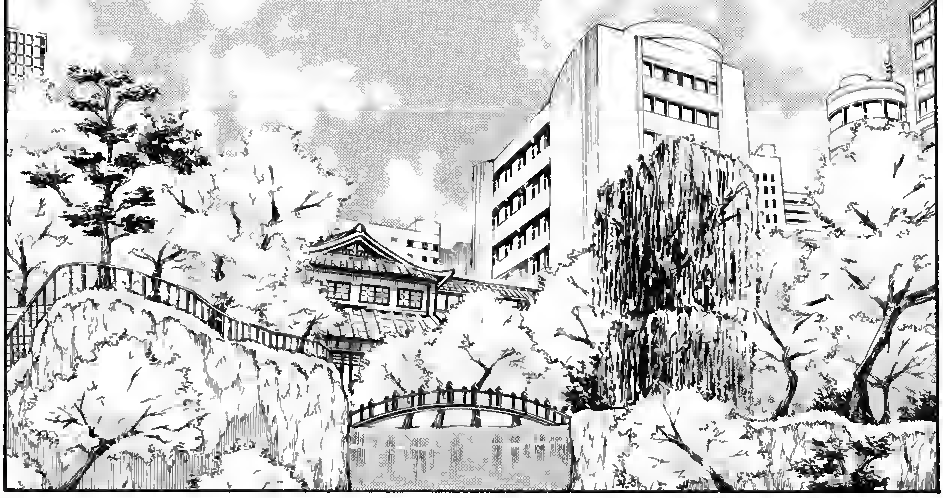
AS A JOURNALIST, HOW WILL YOUR PEN WAGE YOUR BATTLES...
HOW WOULD YOU FEEL?
...FROM HERE ON, AND INTO THE FUTURE?
IF THERE'S NO TRUTH THAT CAN CHANGE THE WORLD...
...THEN WE'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE ONE UP.

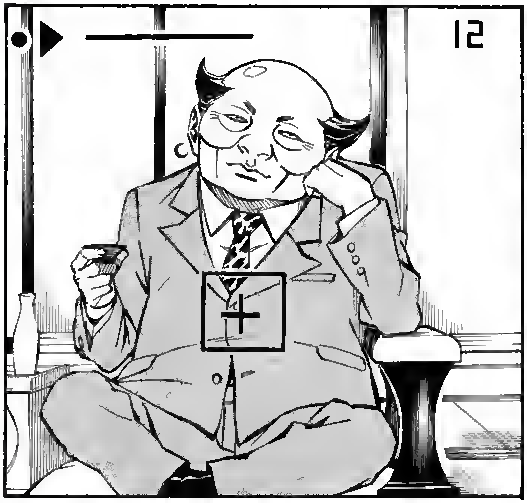
CRUMBLE
NO, SIR...
THUMP
NOW I'M THANKING YOU FOR THIS!
THEN YOU'D BETTER HURRY...
...I JUST REMEMBERED SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT I HAVE TO DO.
!
THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU'VE SAID TODAY.
...YOU ALREADY THANKED ME BACK THEN, YOU KNOW?

LOOKS LIKE I'VE REPAID MY DEBT TO YOU FOR THAT ARTICLE...
...CAN I ASK YOU ONE LAST THING?
!
...YOUR NAME...


SHUFF
!
SLIP
...AFTER I'VE QUIT THE ASSISTORS.
I'LL TELL YOU...






12

SHUFFLE

NOW IF ALL GOES ACCORDING TO PLAN...
INFO'S RIGHT ON THE MONEY.
FENRAX

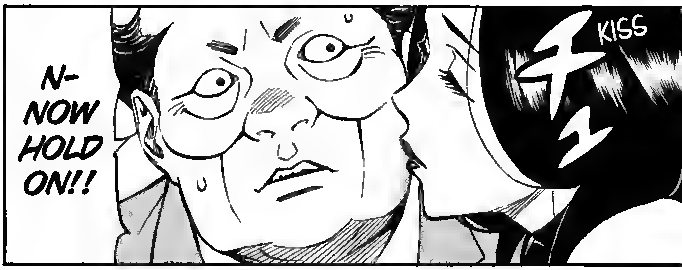
WOW, SHE'S GOR-GEOUS!
KLAK
KLAK
HERE WE ARE.
KA-CHAK
IF THAT CALL GIRL KAEDEKO'S ON THE JOB...
...NO MAN WILL RESIST.
EXCUSE ME THERE, MISS?
I JUST HAD TO REACH OUT TO YOU.
UHH ...?
PARDON THE SUD-DENNESS.
IT'S JUST THAT YOUR BEAUTY SURPASSES ALL THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS IN BLOOM...
AM I DOING THIS RIGHT?
IF YOU SEE A CALL GIRL IN THE TSUBAKI HOTEL LOBBY AROUND THIS TIME...
HARU ?!
...STALL HER FOR ME. SAY STUFF LIKE HOW HER BEAUTY SURPASSES ALL THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS OR SOME-THING.
.....

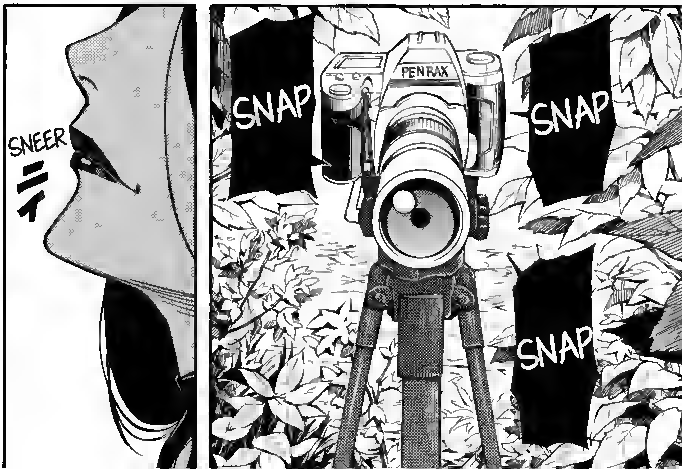
FORGIVE ME, HARU, I DON'T THINK I CAN PULL IT OFF...
WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?! HANDS OFF!
SLAP
SO, SHALL WE...?
TOUCH...
CLATTER
CLATTER
WHAM!
WHOA!
EH ...?
YUUJI?
!
KYOU-GEN-SAN?!
THAT'S FINE!
鏡
I NEED SOME SHUT-EYE, SO I'LL JUST NAP HERE AND...
I GUESS THAT STOPPED HER GOOD...
DROWSINESS OVER FLOWERS AND SEXINESS..
E-EXCUSE ME! DO YOU WANT TO GO FLOWER-VIEWING WITH ME?!
BLUSH
BLUSH
WHA?
M-MY MASK ?!

JUST NEED TO TURN ON THAT CHARM!
WELL... IF YOU WANT SOMETHING DONE RIGHT...
BEEP
UGH... WHERE ARE HARU AND THAT CALL GIRL?!
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?!
!
HEY, BOYS.
AGAIN? THE MINISTER MUST REALLY LOVE HIS PERKS...
GO AHEAD.
A LITTLE NINJA ASKED ME TO DO SOME OGRE-HUNTING...
MY, MY...
!
YOU MUST REALLY ENJOY THE FLOWERS, SIR...
SLIP

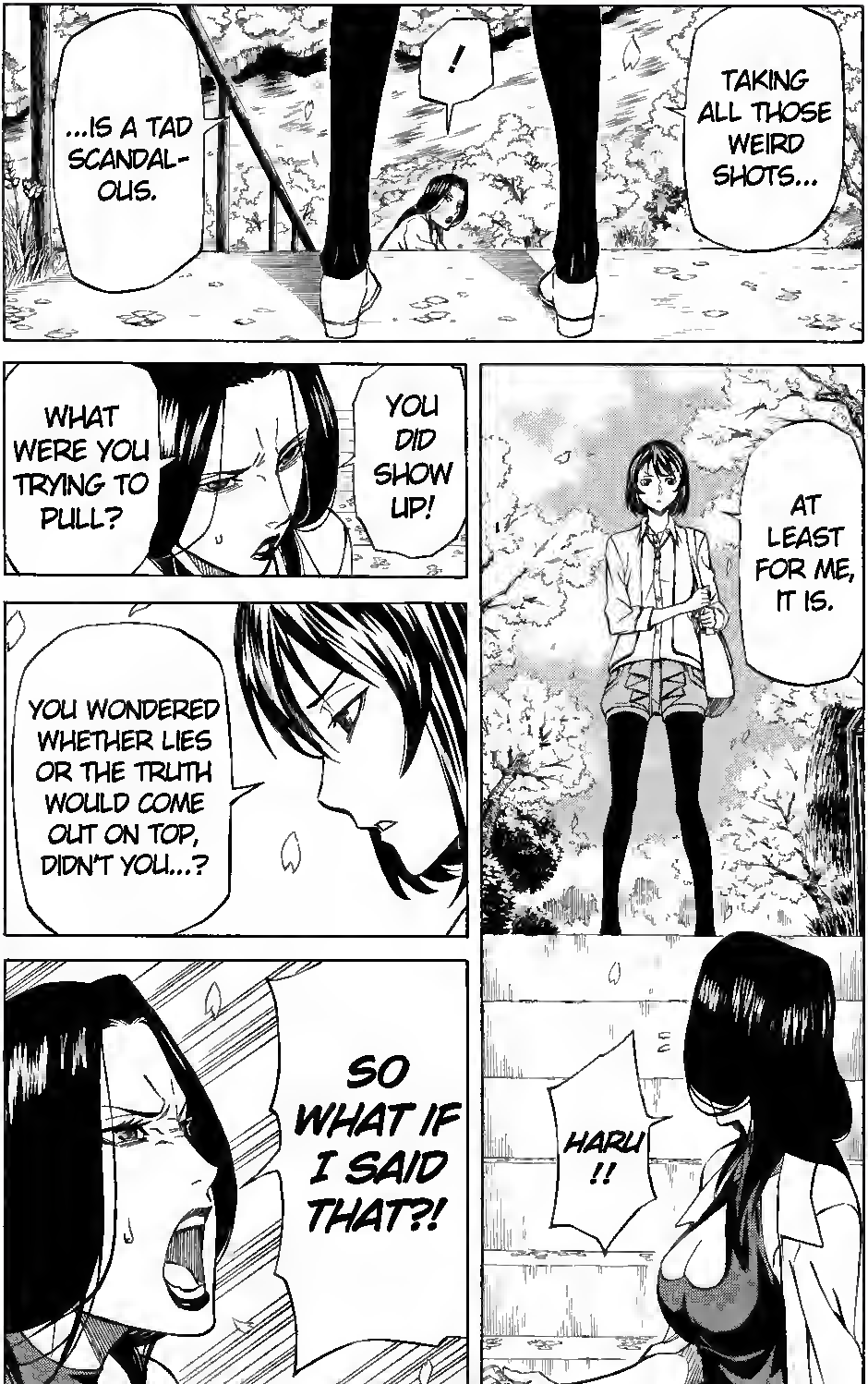
FOR AN OGRE, YOU SURE LOVE YOUR PEACHES, DON'T YOU?
!
WHO'RE YOU?! I DON'T REMEMBER ASKING FOR—
BUT AS THEY SAY... WOMEN OVER FLOWERS...

!
WH-WHERE AM I? OH, I MUST'VE BEEN TERRIBLY DRUNK!
I'M SORRY, I'LL LEAVE IMMEDI-ATELY!
H-HEY !!

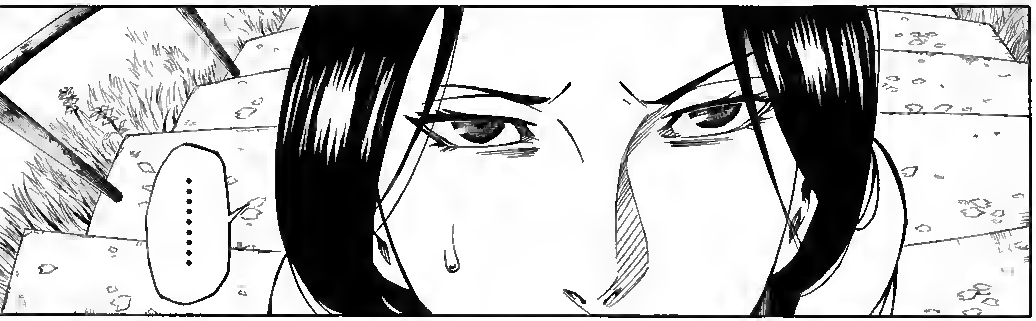

N-NOW HOLD ON!!
KISS


SNEER
SNAP
PENTAX
SNAP
SNAP

BAILING OUT AT THE LAST MINUTE, HONESTLY!
TURNS OUT I NEVER NEEDED TO TEAM UP WITH HARU AFTER ALL!
He reeks like an old man.
I NEVER THOUGHT IT WOULD GO THIS WELL.
WHA-WHAT THE HELL?!
BEEP
BEEP
IT'S ALL JUST SHOTS OF HER MAKING WEIRD FACES!!
SHE'D BETTER THANK ME!
BUT I CAN ALREADY SEE HER WALLOWING IN REGRET OVER MY BIGGEST SCOOP YET!
BEEP


TAKING ALL THOSE WEIRD SHOTS...
!
...IS A TAD SCANDAL-OUS.
AT LEAST FOR ME, IT IS.
YOU DID SHOW UP!
WHAT WERE YOU TRYING TO PULL?
YOU WONDERED WHETHER LIES OR THE TRUTH WOULD COME OUT ON TOP, DIDN'T YOU...?
HARU !!
SO WHAT IF I SAID THAT?!

YOUR ACTIONS TODAY...
...WOULD HAVE CREATED A SECOND REIKO HIRUGUCHI!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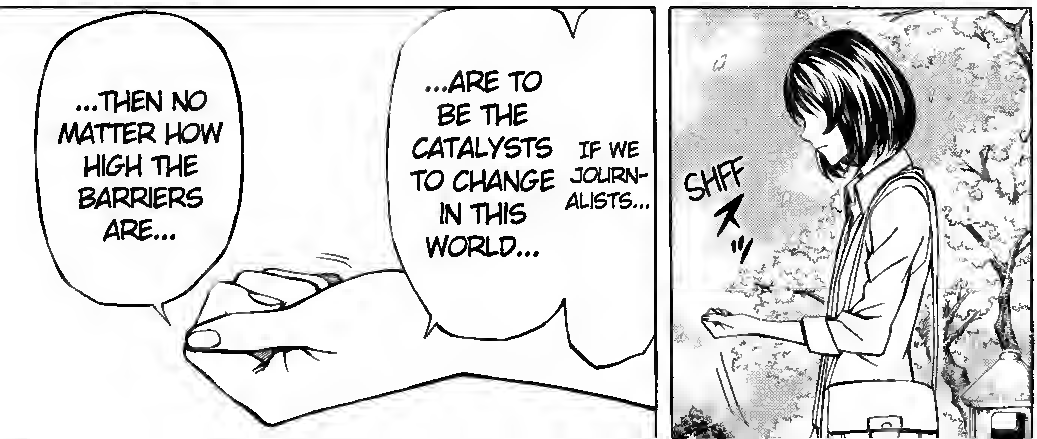
IF WE JOURN-ALISTS...
...ARE TO BE THE CATALYSTS TO CHANGE IN THIS WORLD...
...THEN NO MATTER HOW HIGH THE BARRIERS ARE...
SHFF

...I'LL FIGHT FAIR AND SQUARE.
NOT WITH LIES...
...BUT THE TRUTH!

!
ARE YOU SURE YOU WANTED TO CELEBRATE YOUR SAFE RETURN... HERE?
'CUZ AFTER THIS...
マイクック
My Cook
CHERRY BLOSSOMS...?
Side dishes
つまみ
500円
500 yen
PUP

...WAS WHAT I NEEDED AFTER ALL...
TOO GOOD, MISSY?
男魂
MANLY SOUL
THIS TASTES SO BAD, THE TEARS WON'T STOP...
COMING HERE...
...WELCOME BACK, HARU.
ヤニ -nice 100円
シュー -shu 300円
100 yen
300 yen
OK
...OUR GIRL'S FINALLY BACK.
...I'M HOME.

English Digital Edition
Chapter 006

Sukedachi 09
助太刀09
Seishi Kishimoto

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SUKEDACHI NINE
助太刀09

BWR
WRR WRR
WRR WRR
WRR
FLAP
KA-CHANK
EVERY-THING'S WORKING --
mirror:7
!!!
!?
ドォオォォー…
BOOM
CHIEF !!

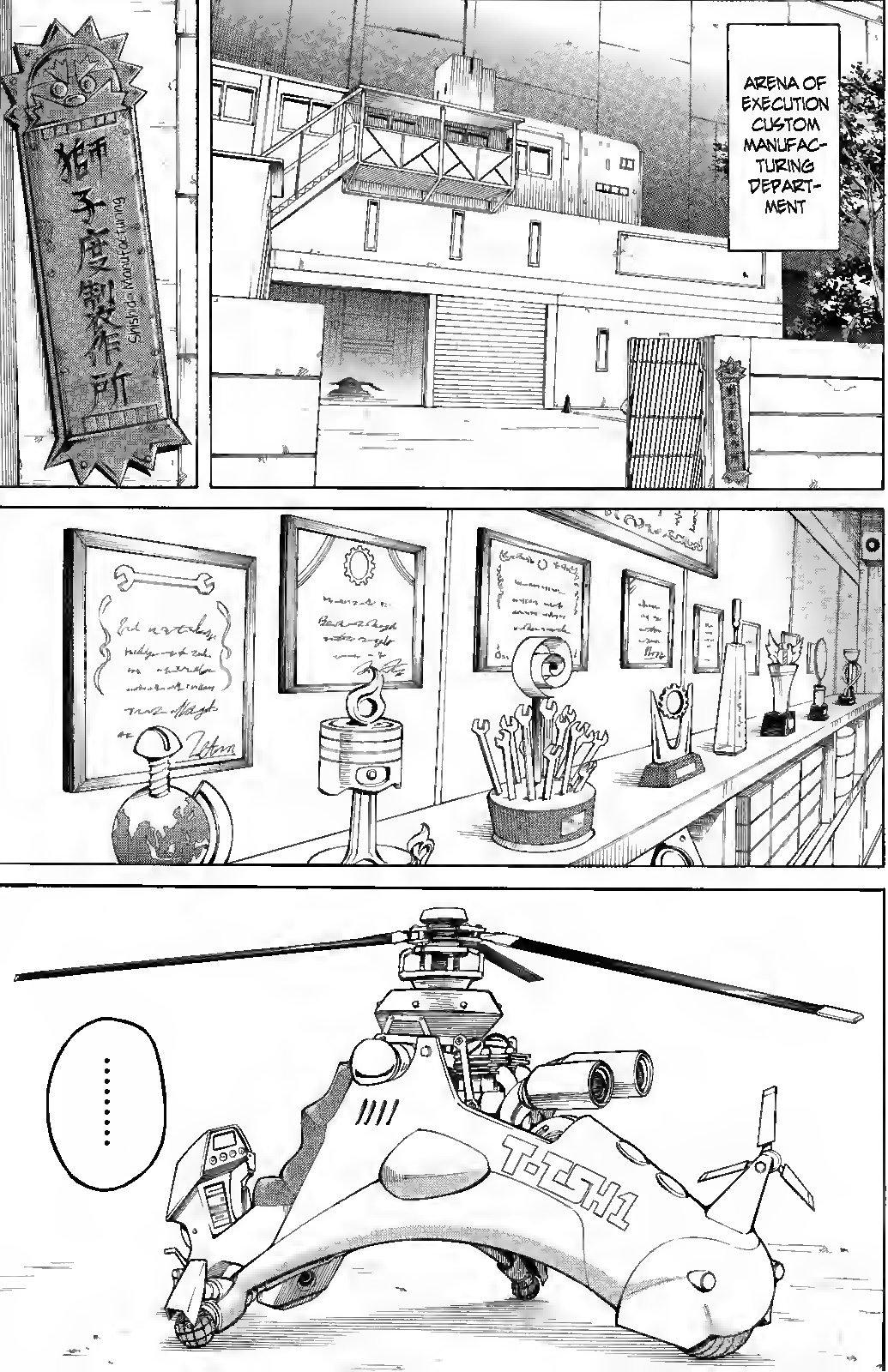
[Tool]

1. The generic term referring to any device used to create things, perform jobs, etc. I.e. carpenter's tool, construction tool

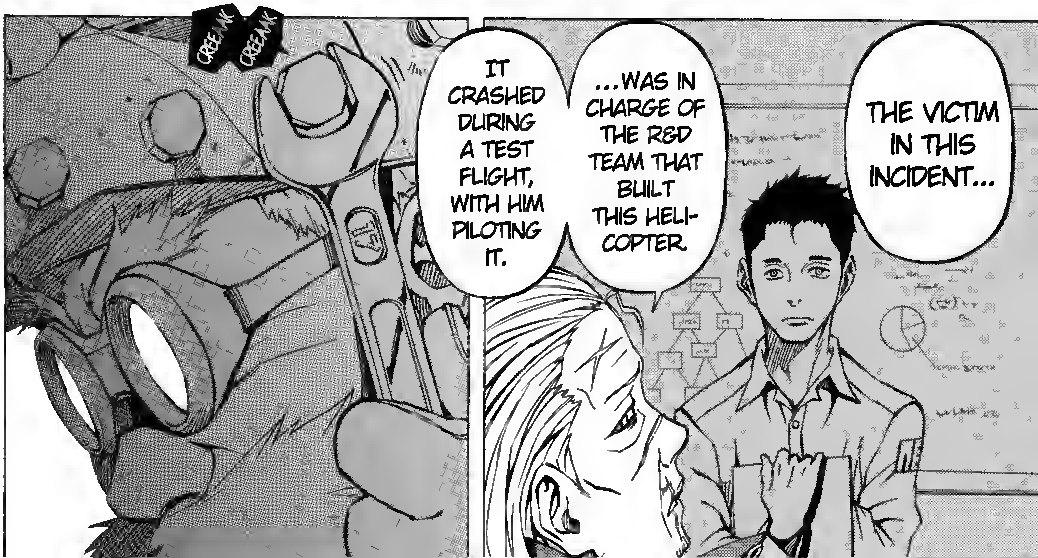
2. Any object that is used to achieve something. Also refers to a person who is used by someone else in the same manner. A method. I.e. To use as a tool in deal making.

(From "Daijisen" published by Shogakukan)

MIRROR:7
"MURDER WEAPON"


獅子度製作所
SHISHIDO WOODCRAFTING
ARENA OF EXECUTION CUSTOM MANUFACTURING DEPARTMENT
T-CH1
……

FWIP
YOU'RE TELLIN' ME TO FIX THIS?
YES.


CREAK
CREAK
IT CRASHED DURING A TEST FLIGHT, WITH HIM PILOTING IT.
...WAS IN CHARGE OF THE R&D TEAM THAT BUILT THIS HELI-COPTER.
THE VICTIM IN THIS INCIDENT...

YOU SURE IT AIN'T JUST AN ACCI-DENT?
THE MURDERER STAGED IT TO LOOK LIKE ONE.
...YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE SOME FOUL PLAY WAS AT HAND.
CREEAK
CREEAK
HE KILLED TWO OTHER CO-WORKERS WITH THE SAME METHODS OF SABOTAGE, MAKING THOSE TWO DEATHS LOOK LIKE ACCIDENTS.
THE PERP'S ONE OF THE DEV TEAM MEMBERS.
Custom Manufacturing Department
Head of Staff
Tetsu Shishido (age 60)
THE FAMILY OF THE TEAM LEADER WANTS THE PERP TO GO THROUGH THE SAME SORROW OF BETRAYAL... AND THE SAME FEAR THE LEADER MUST'VE FELT IN THAT CRASH...
THE REQUEST TO HAVE THE PERP EXECUTED BY RETALIATION WAS GRANTED.
.....
IN-FIGHTING AMONG TEAM MEMBERS, EH?
HAPPENS ALL THE TIME...

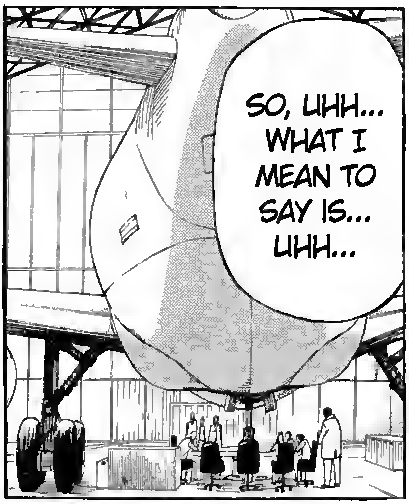
IRK
MURDER WEAPON, YOU SAY?
THAT'S RIGHT, KOUTA.
SO BASICALLY... THIS CHOPPER'S THE MURDER WEAPON.
CLUNK
RARGH
I'LL WELD YOU ALL TO-GETHER, PUNKS !!
ZWIP
GRAB
EYAAAAAHGH!!
?
DREAD
.....
WITHER
I-I-IS IT SOME-THING WE SAID?
WH-WH-WHAT THE HELL ?!

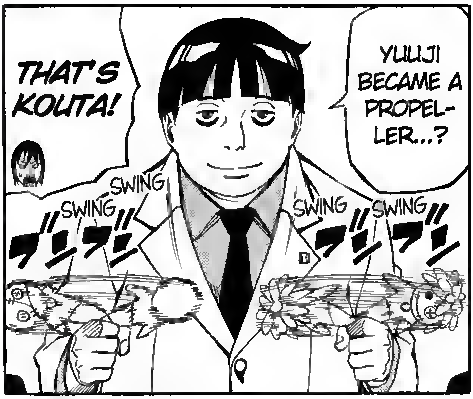
WHY NOT ASK THE DEV TEAM TO HELP OUT?!
Y'KNOW WHAT?
Stop clinging to me, Kouta!
FLIP
FIRST OFF, HOW THE HELL'M I SUPPOSED TO FIX SOMETHING THAT'S IN DEVELOP-MENT?! I HAVEN'T EVEN SEEN THIS THING BEFORE!!
THANKS TO THAT, I CAN'T SPARE ANYONE FOR THIS NEW JOB!
YEAH, MY STAFF'S DOING THOSE REPAIRS!
CLANG
BECAUSE... WE GOT NO MONEY TO SPARE?
REPAIRING THE ARENA'S WALLS ALONE EATS UP SO MUCH OF OUR BUDGET...
SHUFFLE
UHH, WE CAN HEAR YOU?
I EVEN GOT BLUEPRINTS RIGHT HERE!
'CUZ HEY..!
THESE ROOKIES BEHIND ME? THEY SAID THEY'LL HELP YOU AS PART OF THEIR TRAINING...
C'MON CHIEF, CAN'T YOU AT LEAST MAKE THIS THING FLY AGAIN?

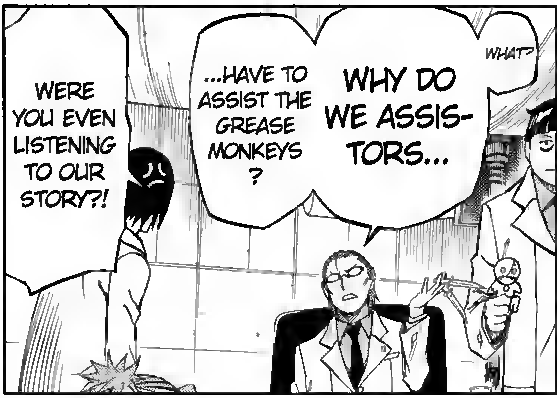
H-HEY! WE AT LEAST GOT THIS MUCH OUTTA THEM, RIGHT?!
WELL, IT IS UNDER DEVELOPMENT. YOU KNOW HOW TRADE SECRETS WORK...
ヒョヨ HIDE
RRRRUMBLE ゴゴゴゴゴ
T-TSH
FWOP ペラ
IT'S NOTHING BUT CLASSI-FIED INFO!!
WHAT IN TARNA-TION'S THIS?!
OHMIGO— WHERE'D HE GO?!
RIGHT, CAPTAIN?!
SWING
SWING
CLUNK カッ
YOU'LL MAKE A FINE PRO-PELLOR, YOU LI'L PUNK!!
GRAB

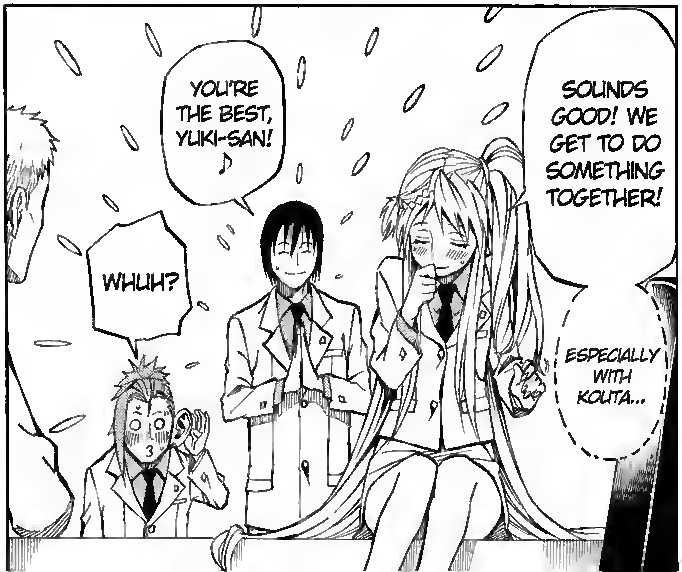
...ASSIST ME!
THIS TIME, I'M HAVING ALL THE AS-SISTORS...
HERE YA GO.

PLEASE HELP US REPAIR THE T-TSH!!
EVERY-ONE!!


SO, UHH... WHAT I MEAN TO SAY IS... UHH...


THAT'S KOUTA!
YUUJI BECAME A PROPEL-LER...?
SWING
SWING
SWING
SWING


WERE YOU EVEN LISTENING TO OUR STORY?!
...HAVE TO ASSIST THE GREASE MONKEYS ?
WHY DO WE ASSIS-TORS...
WHAT?


YOU'RE THE BEST, YUKI-SAN! ♪
WHUH?
SOUNDS GOOD! WE GET TO DO SOMETHING TOGETHER!
ESPECIALLY WITH KOUTA...

...NOT FOOLING ANYONE WITH THAT MASK ON, SIR.
YOU'RE...

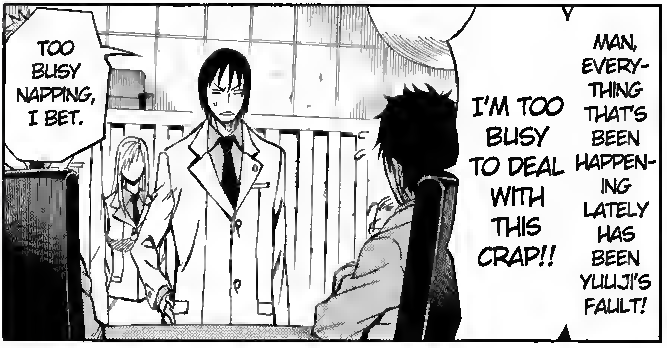
THIS JOB'S GONNA BE TOUGH...
ASSISTING THAT OLD COOT...?
SO THIS CRAFT STANDS FOR "TOTAL TAKEOFF SUPER HELI NO. 1"?
AHH... REMINDS ME OF THE KAYABA KA-1 BACK IN MY ARMY DAYS...
FROM PRODUCTION TO DELIVERY, TO EVEN THE SMALLEST ADJUST-MENTS...
HE PROVIDES US WITH IMPECCABLE SUPPORT WHEN IT COMES TO GIVING US THE MURDERER'S TOOLS.
ABOUT OLD MAN SHISHIDO...
I CAN'T BELIEVE HE WORKS WITH US...
HE'S SO TERRIFYING, I CAN'T EVEN EMPATHIZE WITH HIM!
...ON CARRYING OUT THESE EXECU-TIONS, FOR THE VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES.
...IT'S THAT SUPPORT THAT ALLOWS US ASSISTORS TO FOCUS...

HEY YUUJI... ABOUT YOUR THING WITH THE OLD MAN.
DID YOU HAPPEN TO SAY "MURDER WEAPON" RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM?
WHA?
I SORTA DID, BUT...
So you WERE awake.

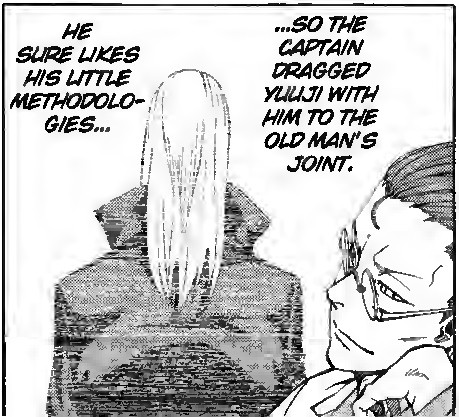
カロロン
CLUNK
YEAH, BUT HE'S JUST... SO HARD TO DEAL WITH.
HE'S LIKE A WALKING HUMAN MURDER WEAPON...

?

YOU'VE BEEN WITH US FOR OVER A YEAR...
...AND YOU KNOW NOTHING ABOUT HIM?
BLEH


TOO BUSY NAPPING, I BET.
I'M TOO BUSY TO DEAL WITH THIS CRAP!!
MAN, EVERY-THING THAT'S BEEN HAPPEN-ING LATELY HAS BEEN YUUJI'S FAULT!

...RIGHT?
...BUT A MURDER WEAPON'S A "MURDER WEAPON"...


HE SURE LIKES HIS LITTLE METHODOLO-GIES...
...SO THE CAPTAIN DRAGGED YUUJI WITH HIM TO THE OLD MAN'S JOINT.

Mornin'!
AND SO BEGAN THE OLD MAN'S TASK OF REPAIRING THE CHOPPER, WITH THE HELP OF THE NINE ASSISTORS.
DON'T SHIRK YOUR MORNING STRETCHES IF YOU DON'T WANNA GET HURT!
One and two and—

HMMMM... I KNOW IT'S A REQUEST FROM THE OLD MAN, BUT...
CAN YOU SELL THIS STUFF TO US ON THE CHEAP?
Kagemaru Engineering Ltd.
影丸 エンジニア㈱

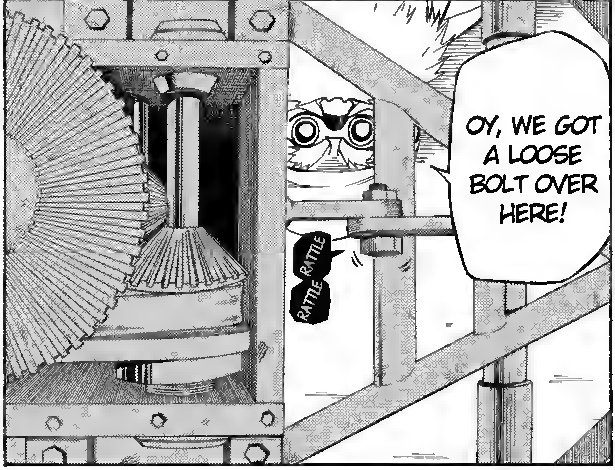
SWOON
SWOON
SHE'S SOOO ADOR-ABLE!
OH, ALL RIIIIGHT! ♪

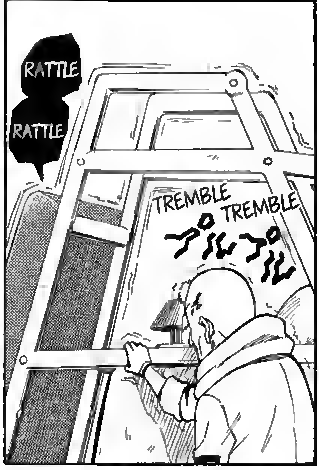
PERK
PRETTY PLEASE? ♪
Note. She's 25

MY BARGAIN-FU... FAILS ME...
SOBBB
DUDE... CRYING WON'T HELP—

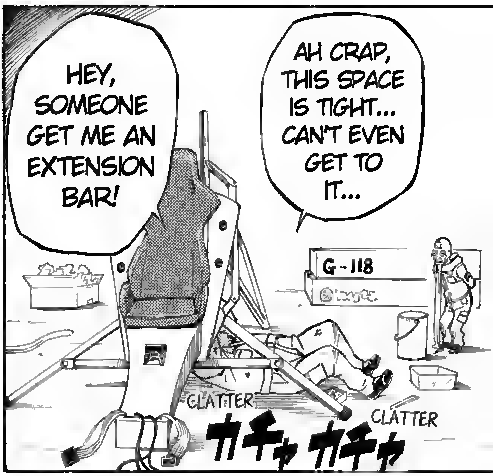
PEEK

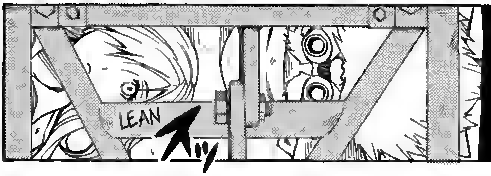
TACK
COMPARED TO THE OTHER SCREWS...
...THIS ONE'S ONE MILLIMETER SHORT...
SIZZLE
SUR-GERY!
SUR-GERY!
THE ARTERY'S ALL HOOKED UP, SIR! ♪
FWOOOO-VROOOO-OOM!
Up into the air~~
MEOW!
K-CHAK
K-CHAK
THAT'S A GOOD CHOPPER, MY BOY! KEEP IT UP!

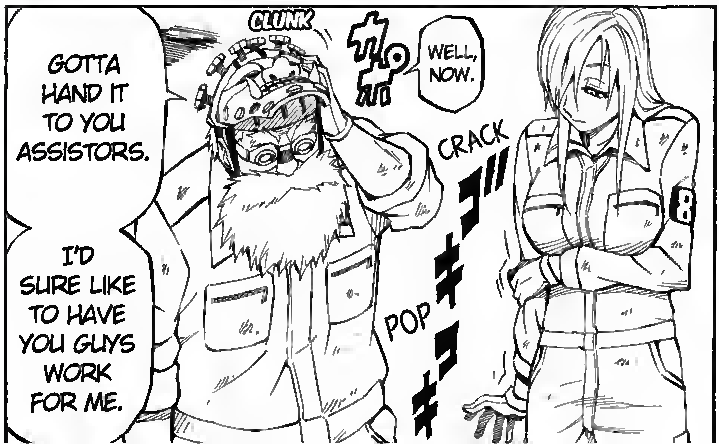

OY, WE GOT A LOOSE BOLT OVER HERE!
RATTLE
RATTLE


RATTLE
RATTLE
TREMBLE
TREMBLE

CRICK
CRICK
!

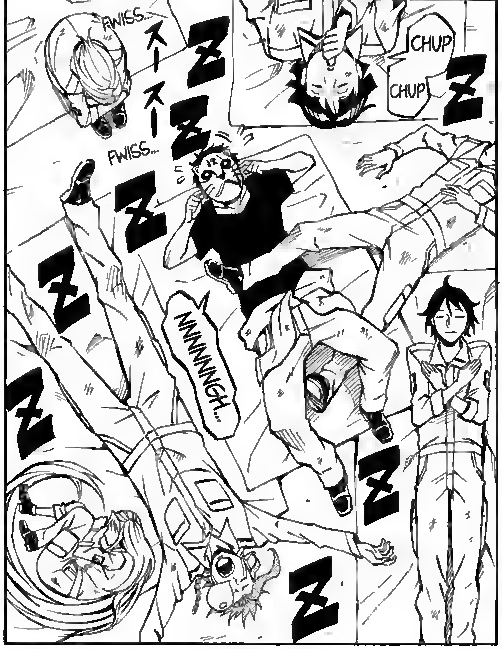

HEY, SOMEONE GET ME AN EXTENSION BAR!
AH CRAP, THIS SPACE IS TIGHT... CAN'T EVEN GET TO IT...
G-118
CLATTER
CLATTER


LEAN

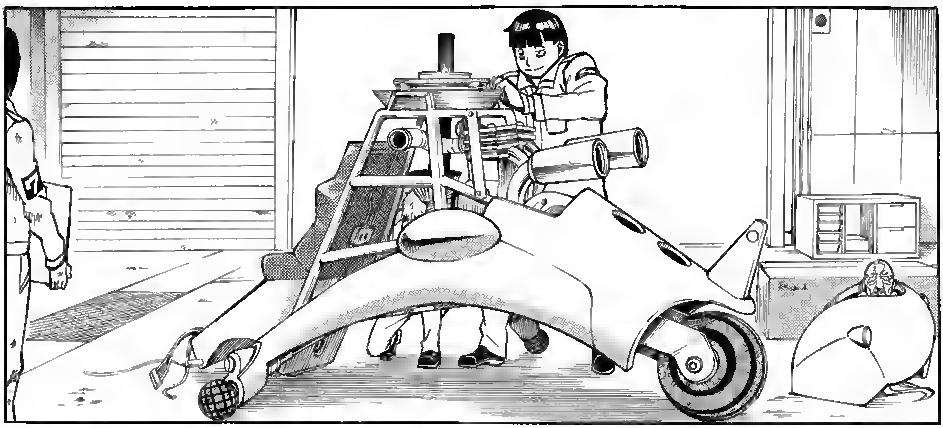

GOTTA HAND IT TO YOU ASSISTORS.
I'D SURE LIKE TO HAVE YOU GUYS WORK FOR ME.
CLUNK
WELL, NOW.
CRACK
POP

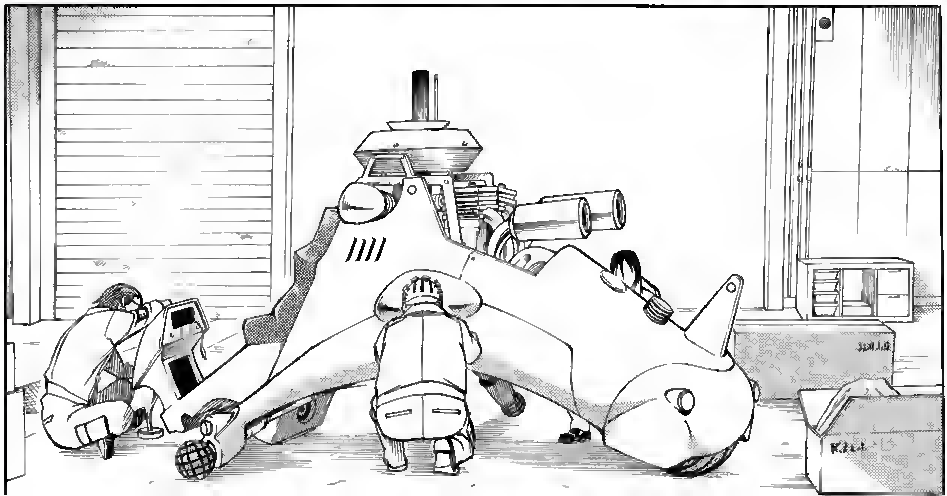
SQUIRK

カッ
CLANK
……
WHA ?!
CLANGG
シャキン
HRN-NGH!
EYAA-GH!!
ナッ
GNASH
!!!
GRAW-RRR !!
?
!
RUB
ゴシ
RUB
ゴシ
!
HEH HEH...
ﾌﾌﾌ

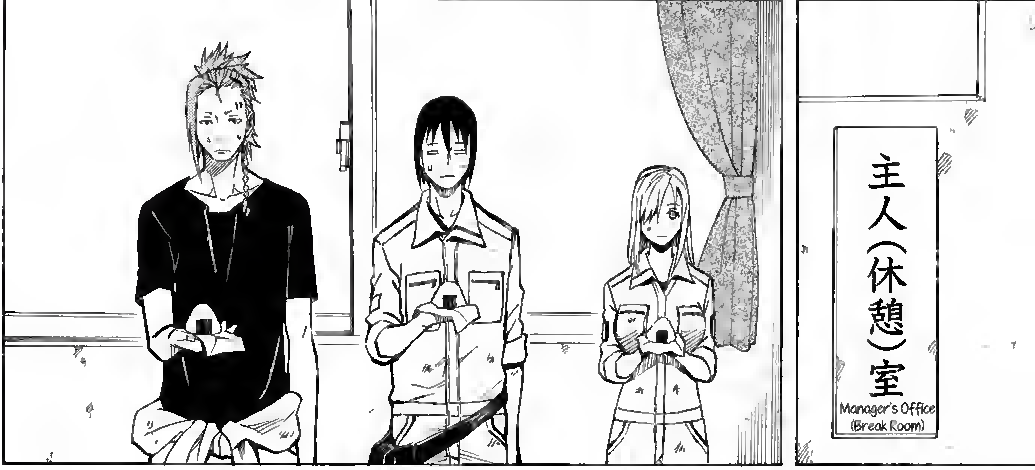

FWISS...
スースー
FWISS...
CHUP
CHUP!
NNNNNNGH...

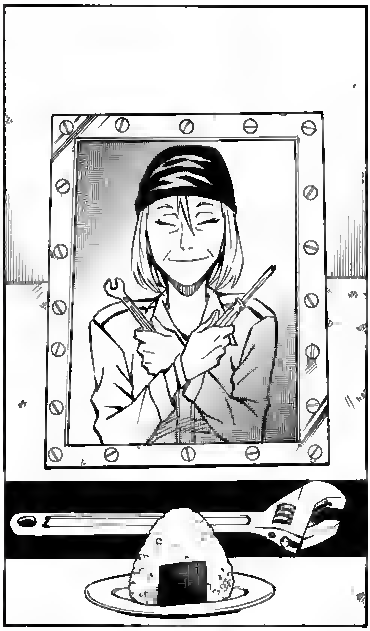
VROOOOOOM
ZZZ

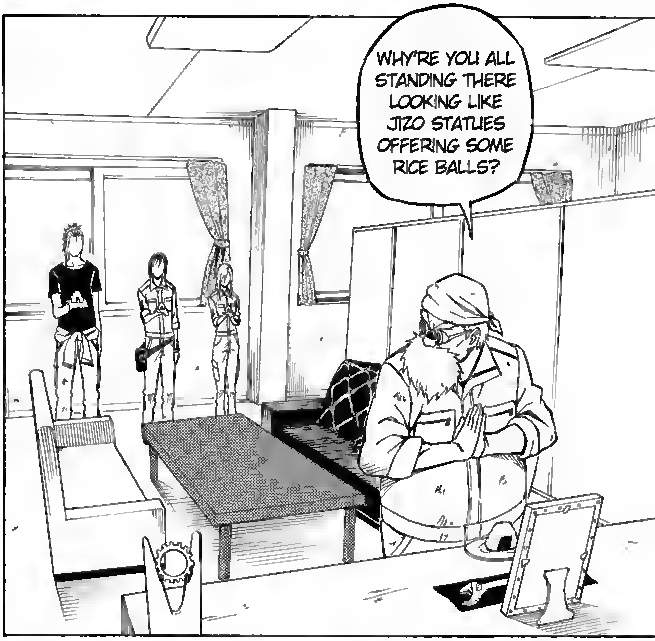




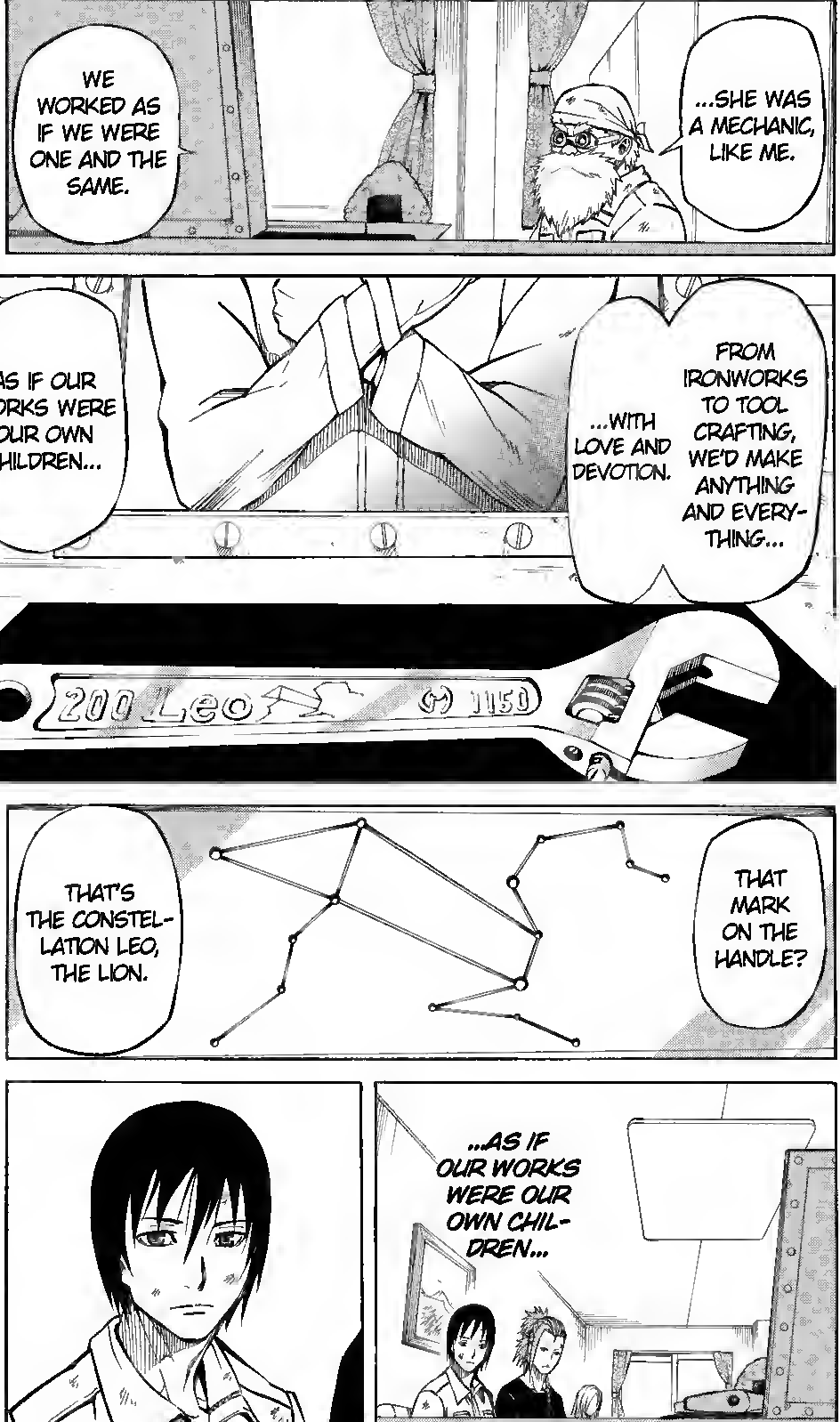
"MURDER WEAPON"...
?
CLUNK
DROP
HEY, WE GOT ALL THESE EXTRA SCREWS...
IT'S A MURDER WEAPON, KID. WE'RE GONNA DESTROY IT ANYWAY.
TEN OR TWENTY EXTRA SCREWS AIN'T NOTHING.
DELISH!
CHOMP
SNEAKY
SNEAK
II II II II !!
DAMMIT YUJII-IIIII
THE WORDS "MURDER WEAPON" MAKE HIM GO INSANE... I JUST DON'T KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH HIM.
THE OLD MAN'S LIKE THESE RICE BALLS... WHAT'S GOING ON INSIDE HIS HEART?
YELIGH! PICKLED PLUMS AGAIN?!
I GOT THE BONITO AND SOY!


主人(休憩)室
Manager's Office
(Break Room)




WHY'RE YOU ALL STANDING THERE LOOKING LIKE JIZO STATUES OFFERING SOME RICE BALLS?

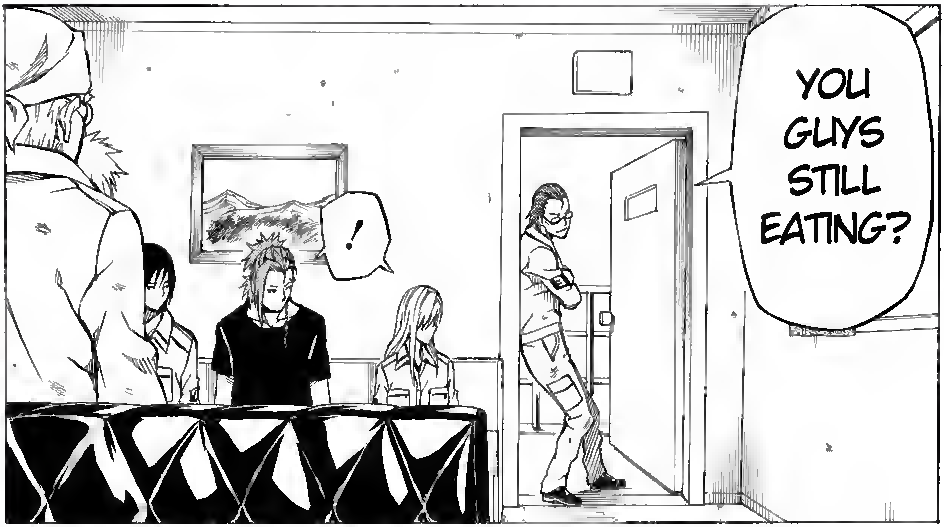
SHE'S QUITE THE LOOKER, AIN'T SHE?!
HYAH HAH HAH!
IS...
...THAT YOUR WIFE?

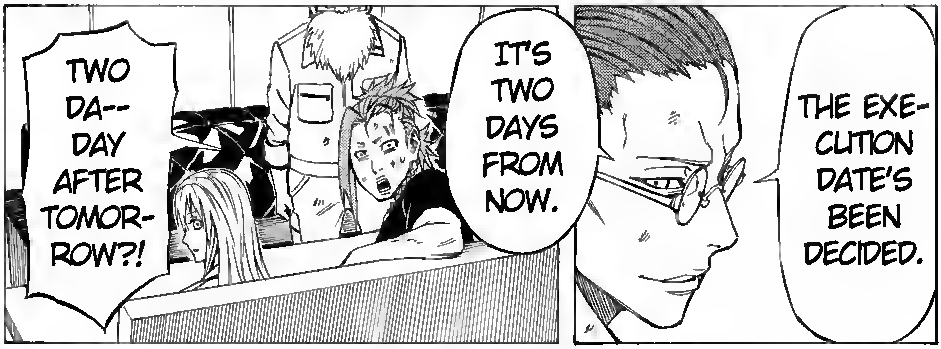

WE WORKED AS IF WE WERE ONE AND THE SAME.
...SHE WAS A MECHANIC, LIKE ME.
AS IF OUR WORKS WERE OUR OWN CHILDREN...
...WITH LOVE AND DEVOTION.
FROM IRONWORKS TO TOOL CRAFTING, WE'D MAKE ANYTHING AND EVERY-THING...
200 Leo
1150
THAT'S THE CONSTEL-LATION LEO, THE LION.
THAT MARK ON THE HANDLE?
...AS IF OUR WORKS WERE OUR OWN CHIL-DREN...

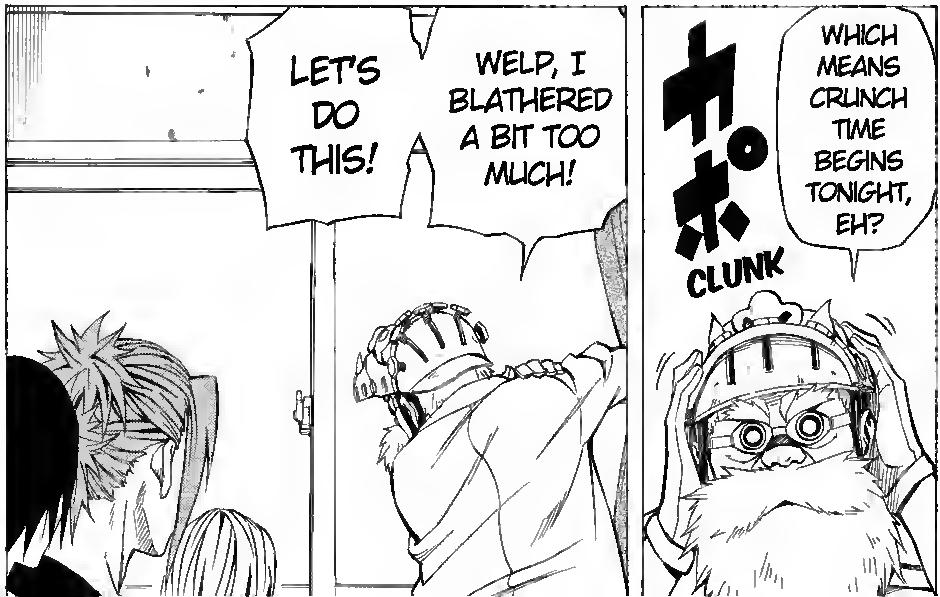
HOW-EVER..
カチャ
CLINK
AH!
SLIP
CLACK
...WHO'LL CALL ANYTHING A "MURDER WEAPON" THE MOMENT IT BRINGS INJURY TO OTHERS.
POINT
THERE ARE PLENTY OF PEOPLE OUT THERE--YOU GUYS INCLUD-ED--
THE TOOLS THEMSELVES AREN'T TO BLAME!
BUT HUMANS ARE THE ONES WHO MISUSE AND ABUSE THESE TOOLS.
IT MAY BE A KNIFE, OR IT MAY BE A WRENCH.
THERE'S NOTHING MORE TO IT THAN THAT.
TOOLS ARE JUST TOOLS.

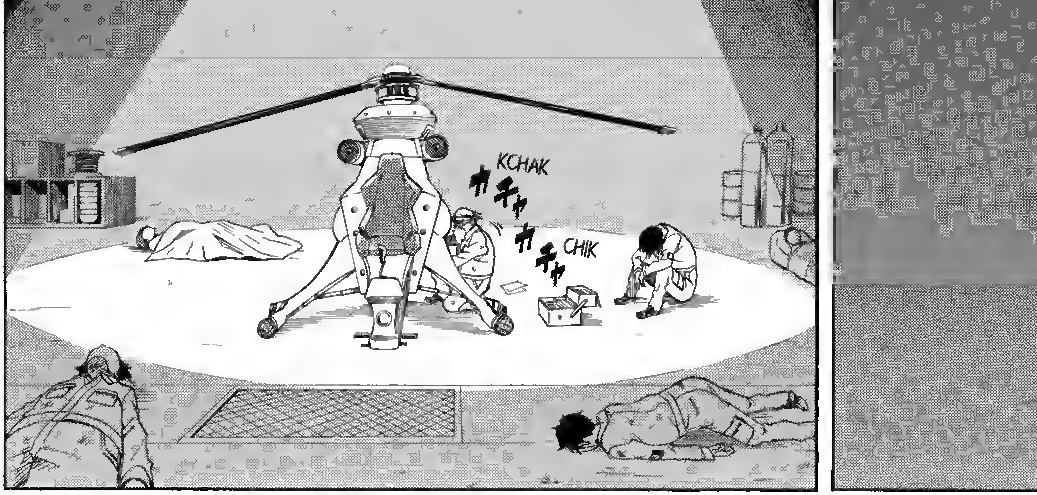
HUMANS CREATE THEM. AND HUMANS USE THEM.
SWORDS AND GUNS... AND ALL WEAPONS FOR THAT MATTER...

THESE THINGS ARE VICTIMS TOO...?


!
YOU GUYS STILL EATING?


TWO DA-- DAY AFTER TOMOR-ROW?!
IT'S TWO DAYS FROM NOW.
THE EXE-CUTION DATE'S BEEN DECIDED.


LET'S DO THIS!
WELP, I BLATHERED A BIT TOO MUCH!
CLUNK
WHICH MEANS CRUNCH TIME BEGINS TONIGHT, EH?


KCHAK
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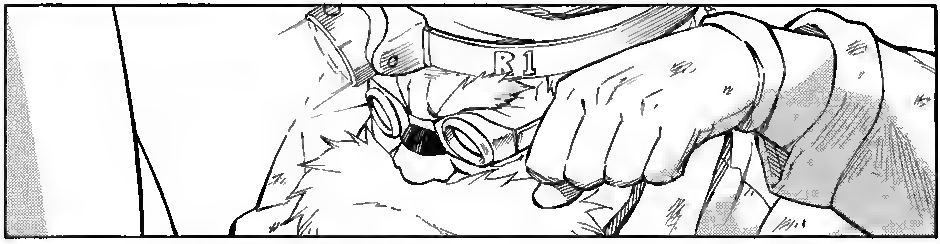
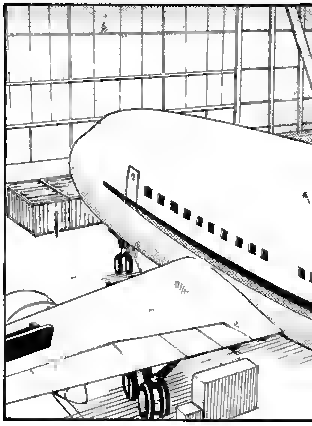
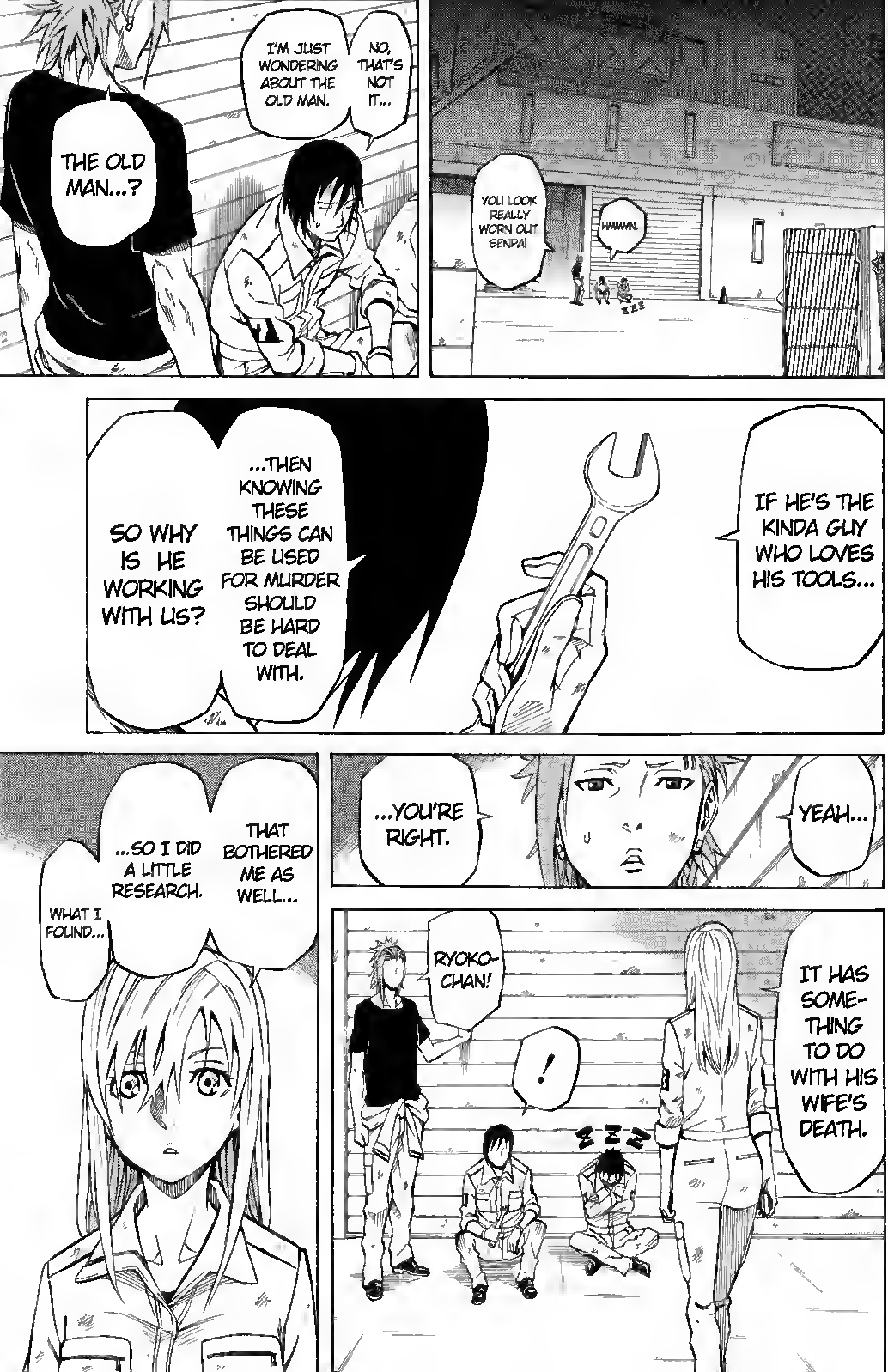

R1

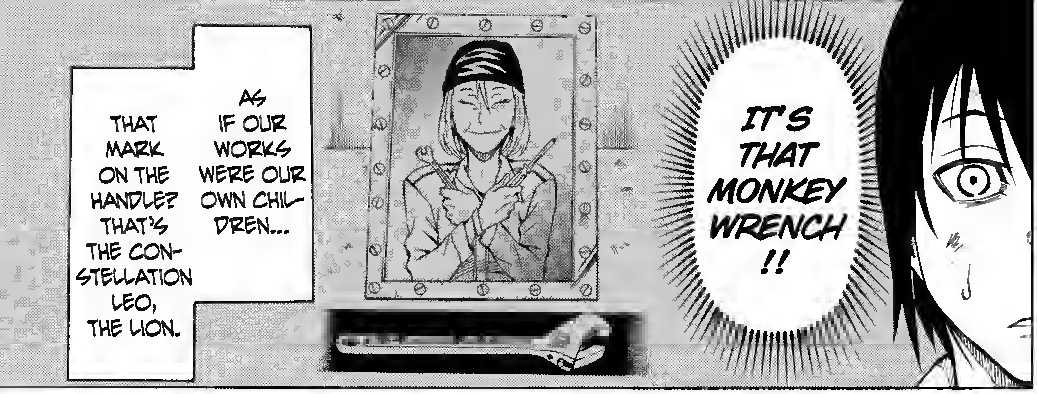
BEEP
KTAKA-TAKA
カチャカチャ
Assistors Research Room
(Modified Economy Seating)

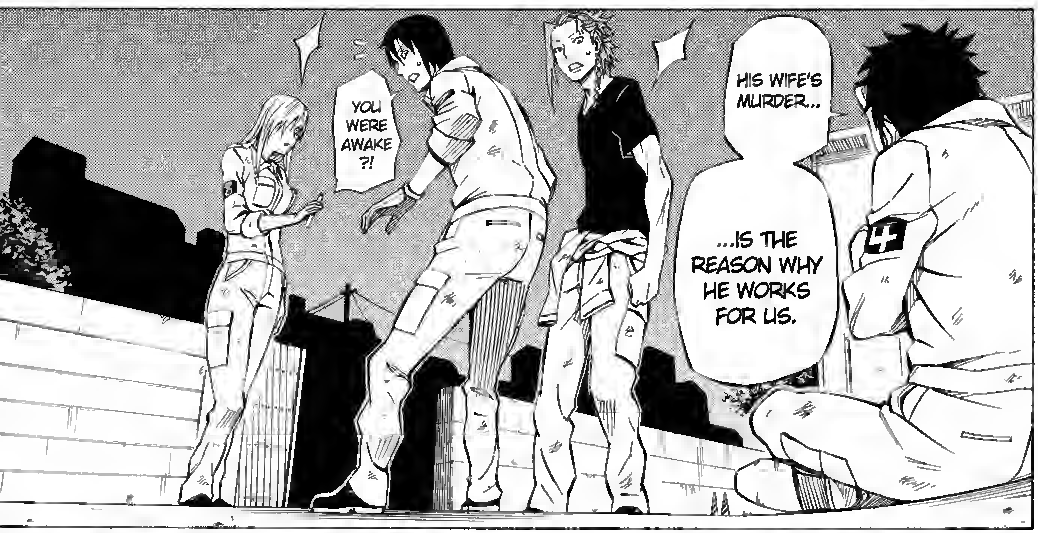


THIS IS...
!

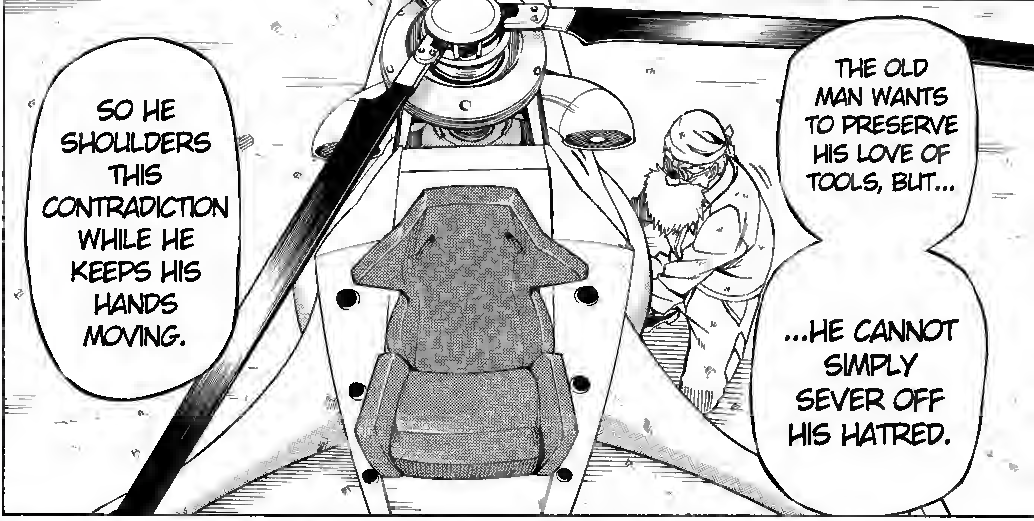

I'M JUST WONDERING ABOUT THE OLD MAN.
NO, THAT'S NOT IT...
THE OLD MAN...?
YOU LOOK REALLY WORN OUT SENPAI
HMMMN.
IF HE'S THE KINDA GUY WHO LOVES HIS TOOLS...
...THEN KNOWING THESE THINGS CAN BE USED FOR MURDER SHOULD BE HARD TO DEAL WITH.
SO WHY IS HE WORKING WITH US?
...YOU'RE RIGHT.
YEAH...
THAT BOTHERED ME AS WELL...
...SO I DID A LITTLE RESEARCH.
WHAT I FOUND...
RYOKO-CHAN!
!
IT HAS SOME-THING TO DO WITH HIS WIFE'S DEATH.

...WAS THAT SHE WAS KILLED...
BURGLARY AND HOMICIDE AT A FACTORY
SUSPECT GAMA NEGURO
...DURING A ROB-BERY.
!
KILLED ?!
NOT ONLY THAT... THIS IS THE MURDER WEAPON.
!!
YOU'RE...
YOU'RE KIDDING ME!
THE CONSTEL-LATION LEO!!
200 Leo


IT'S THAT MONKEY WRENCH !!
AS IF OUR WORKS WERE OUR OWN CHIL-DREN...
THAT MARK ON THE HANDLE? THAT'S THE CON-STELLATION LEO, THE LION.

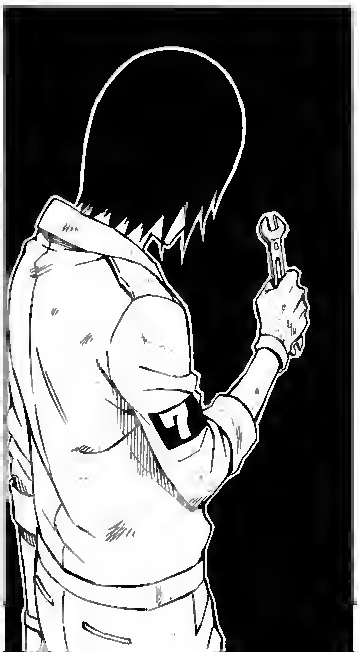

HIS WIFE'S MURDER...
...IS THE REASON WHY HE WORKS FOR US.
YOU WERE AWAKE ?!

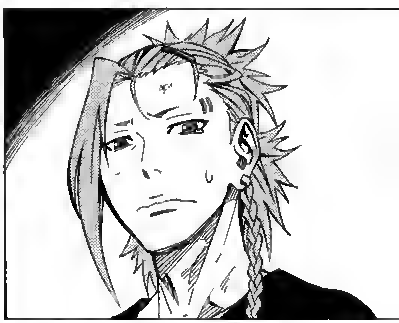
...WILL NO DOUBT CREATE MORE OBJECTS HE LOATHES TO CALL "MURDER WEAPONS."
狸
TANUKI
THE SORROW AND FURY HE EXPERIENCED THE DAY HIS FAMILY BECAME A VICTIM OF MURDER...


THE OLD MAN WANTS TO PRESERVE HIS LOVE OF TOOLS, BUT...
...HE CANNOT SIMPLY SEVER OFF HIS HATRED.
SO HE SHOULDERS THIS CONTRADICTION WHILE HE KEEPS HIS HANDS MOVING.

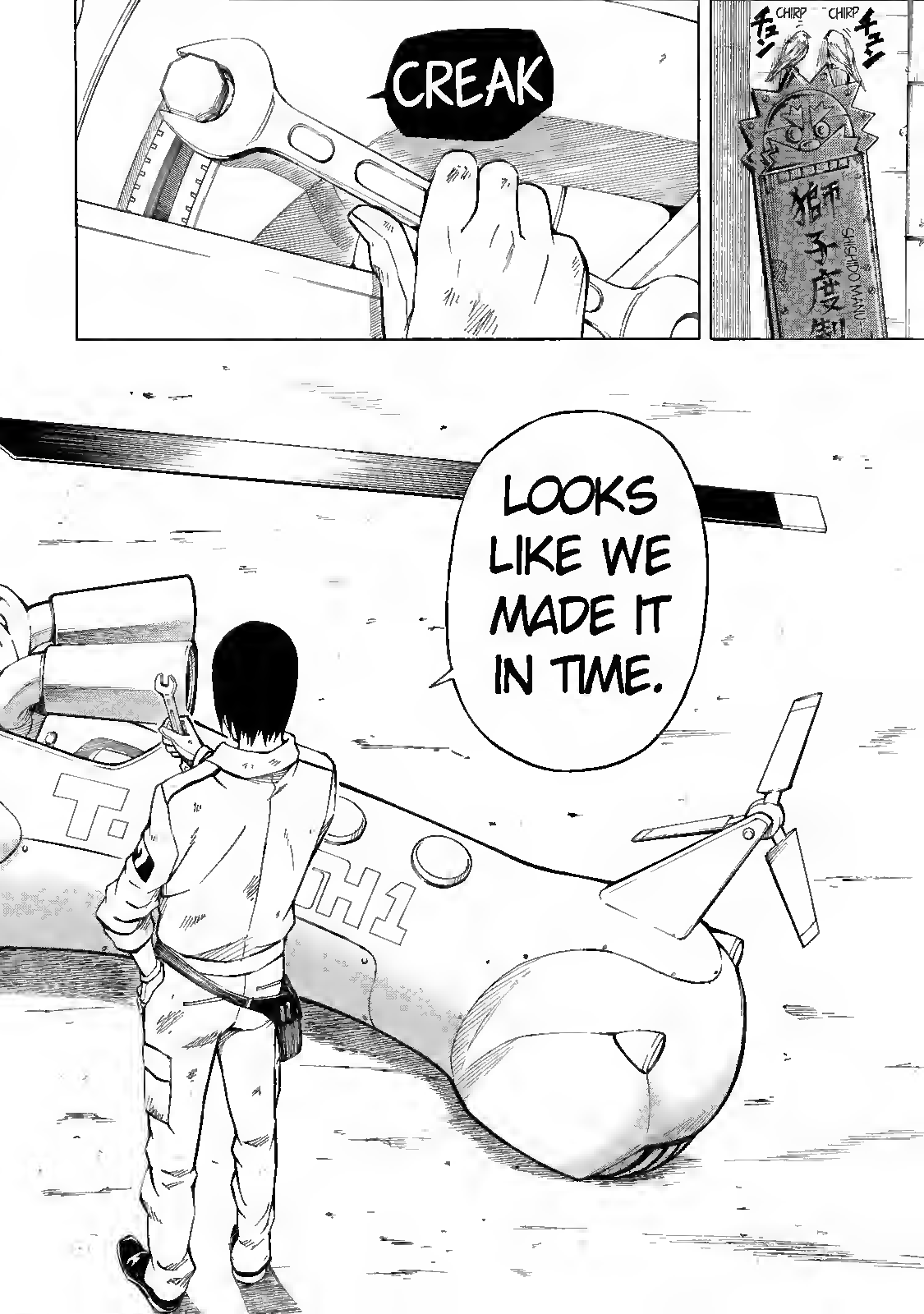
ALL THE WHILE, HE CONTINUES TO SEARCH...
...FOR THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS WITHIN.

ZZZ...



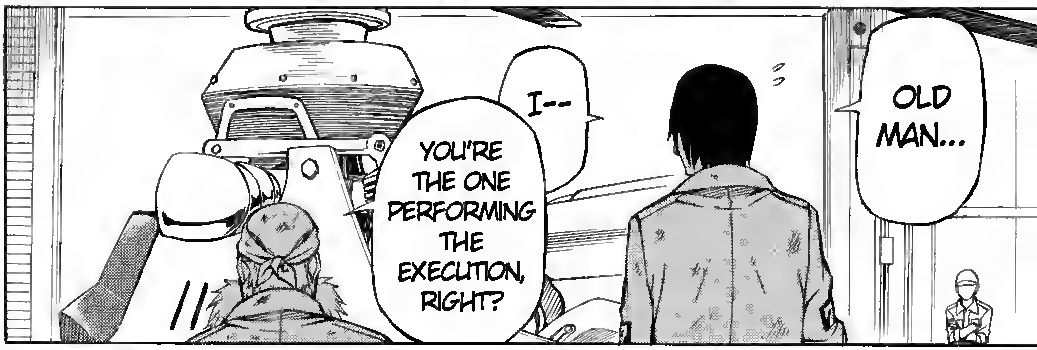


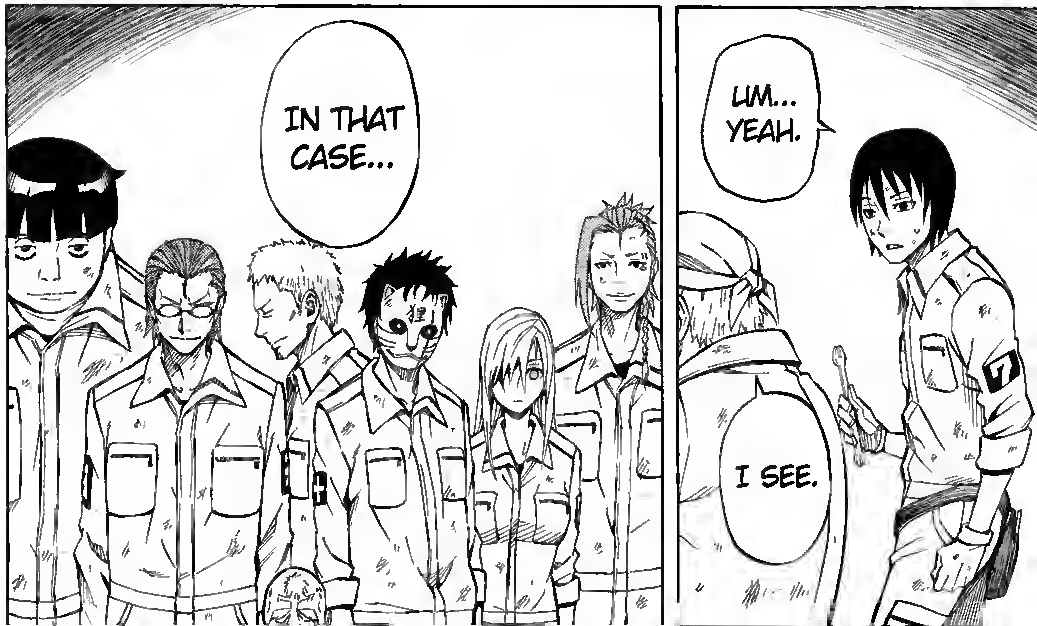
DASH
YER LATE, YUUJI! HELP ME OUT, AL-READY!!
!
...DOES THIS THING SEEM MAD ABOUT SOMETHING?!
OLD MAN! IS IT ME, OR...
.....
SMACK
YEOW!
!?
I KNEW THAT ALREADY.
GRIN
ニヤ
HMPH.


CREAK
CHIRP
CHIRP
SHISHIDO MANU
LOOKS LIKE WE MADE IT IN TIME.

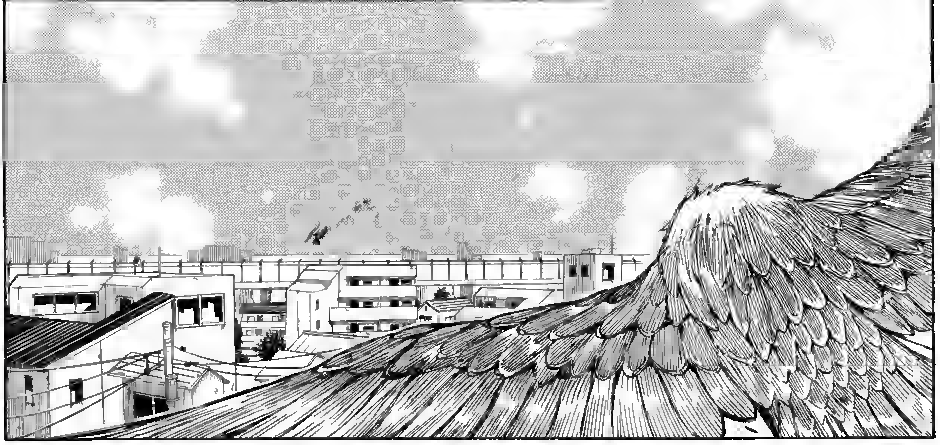
YUP.
WE'RE DONE ASSISTING ME. WE NOW GOTTA ASSIST THE AVENGERS.

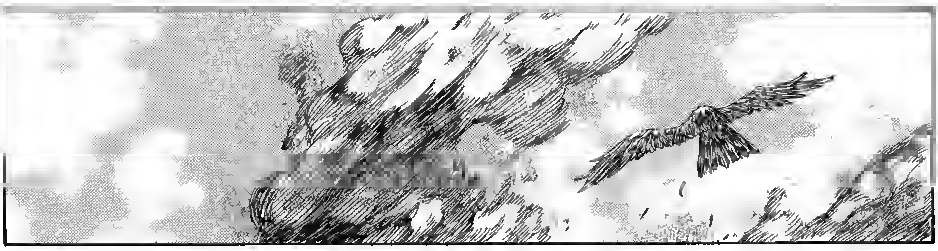
SWORDS AND GUNS... AND ALL WEAPONS FOR THAT MATTER? HUMANS CREATE THEM. AND HUMANS USE THEM.
THE TOOLS THEMSELVES AREN'T TO BLAME. TOOLS ARE JUST TOOLS-- THERE'S NOTHING MORE TO IT THAN THAT.

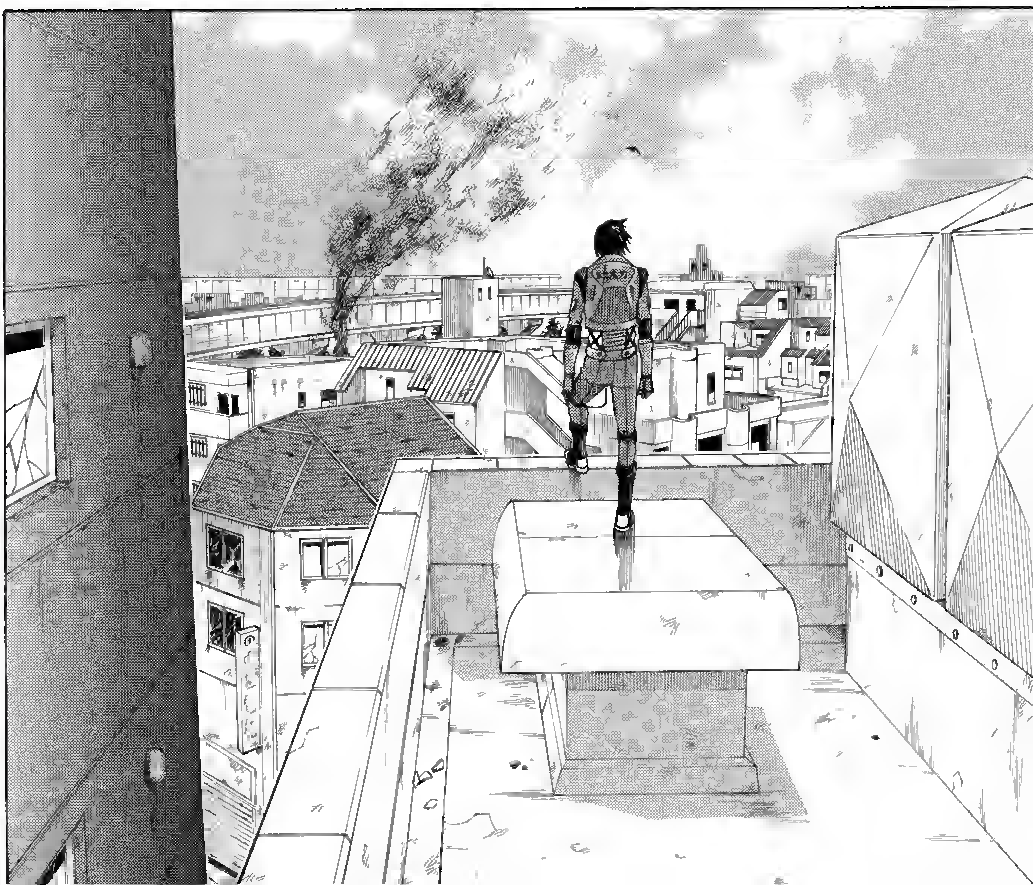

I--
YOU'RE THE ONE PERFORMING THE EXECUTION, RIGHT?
OLD MAN...

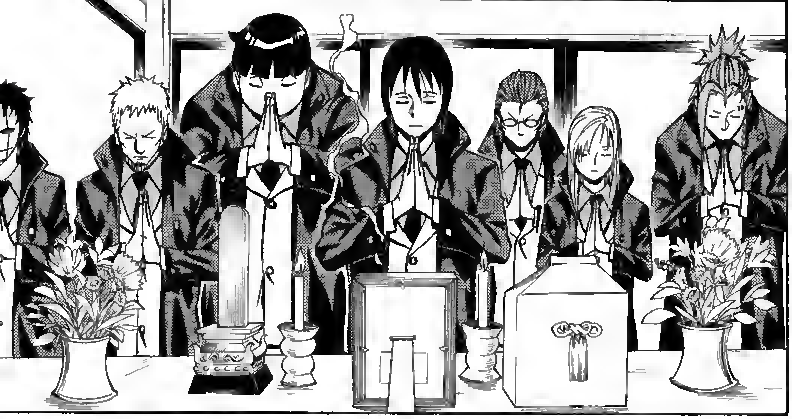

IN THAT CASE...
UM... YEAH.
I SEE.

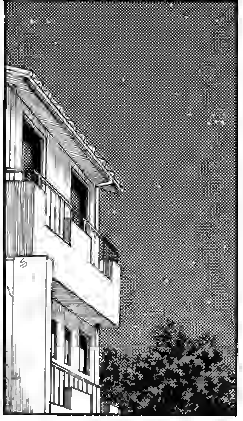
.....
YES, SIR!
...DON'T DIE OUT THERE.

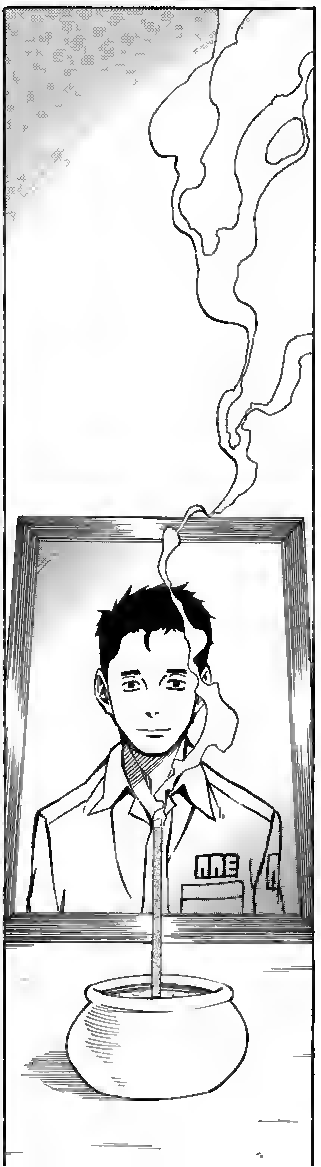


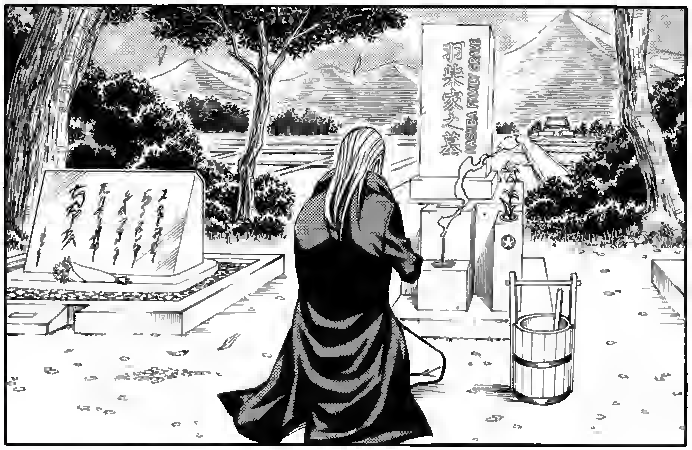


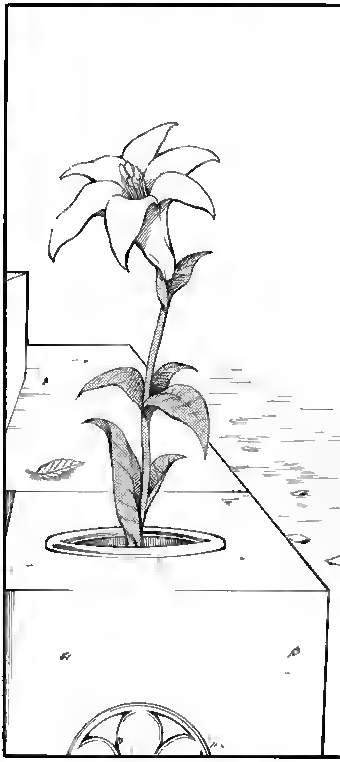




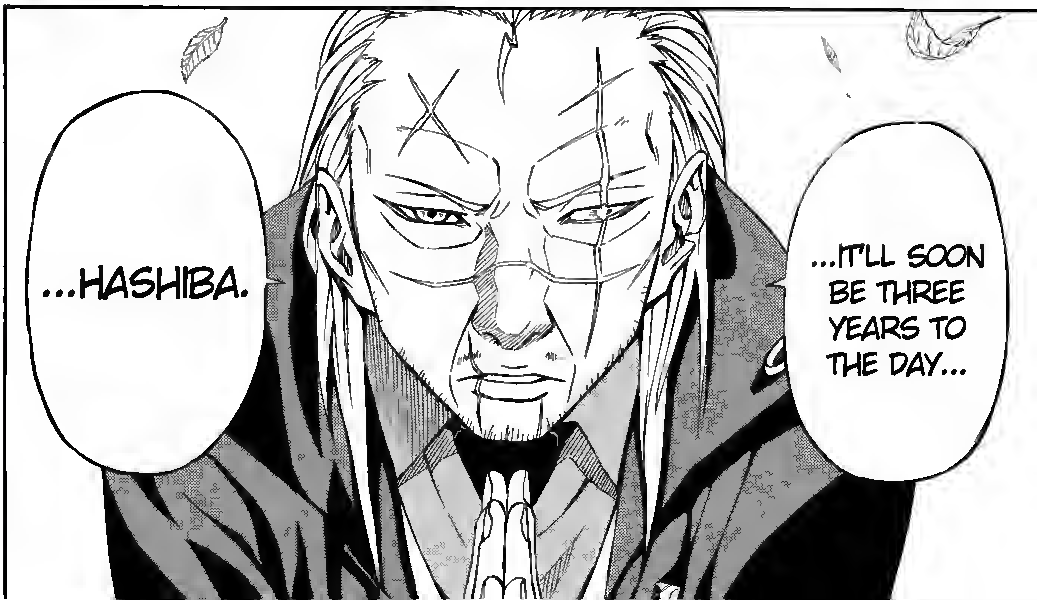






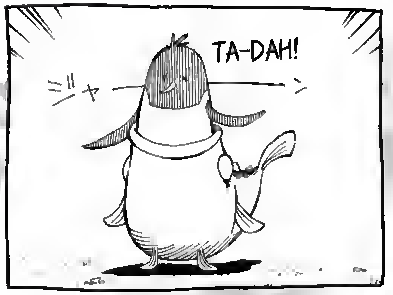


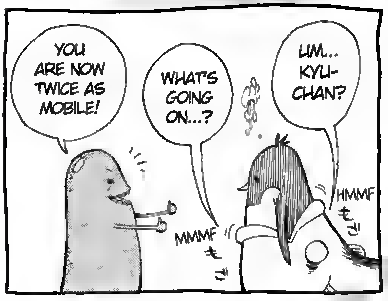
HASHIBA FAMILY GRAVE
YOUR GRAVE'S AS LONELY AS EVER...

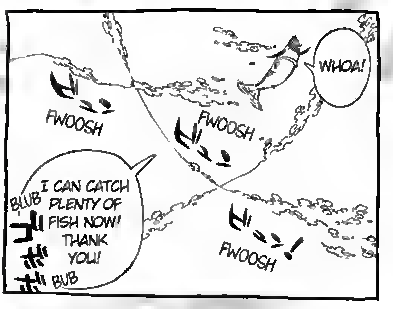

...HASHIBA.
...IT'LL SOON BE THREE YEARS TO THE DAY...

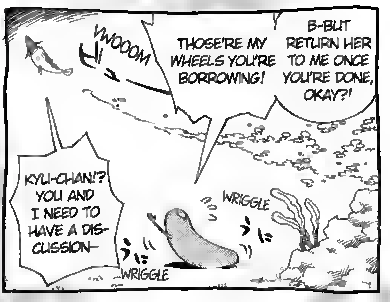
MENTAIKO NO KYU-CHAN ちゃん

MOBILITY

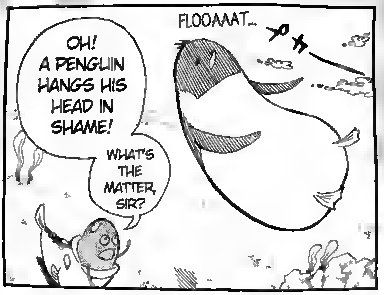


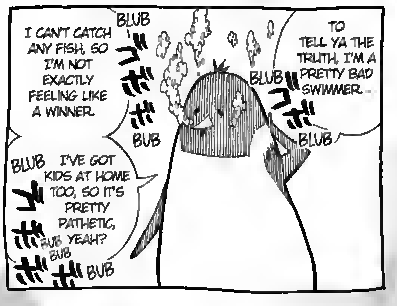


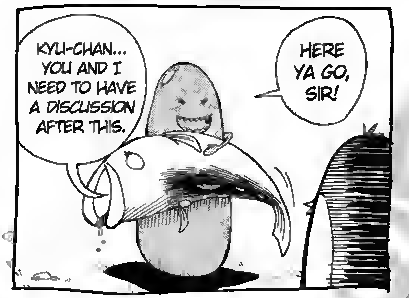



WWOOOM
THOSE'RE MY WHEELS YOU'RE BORROWING!
B-BUT RETURN HER TO ME ONCE YOU'RE DONE, OKAY?!
KYU-CHAN!? YOU AND I NEED TO HAVE A DIS-CUSSION—
WRIGGLE
WRIGGLE

ASSISTING A PENGUIN

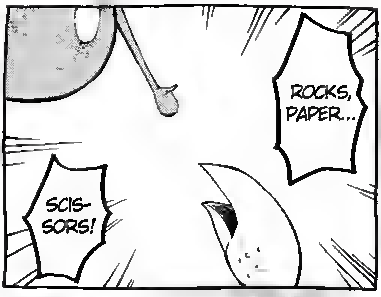


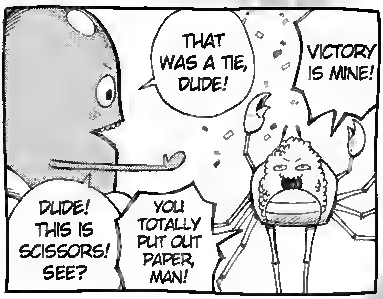

I CAN'T CATCH ANY FISH, SO I'M NOT EXACTLY FEELING LIKE A WINNER.
BLUB
BUB
I'VE GOT KIDS AT HOME TOO, SO IT'S PRETTY PATHETIC, BUT YEAH?
BLUB
BUB
TO TELL YA THE TRUTH, I'M A PRETTY BAD SWIMMER...
BLUB
BLUB

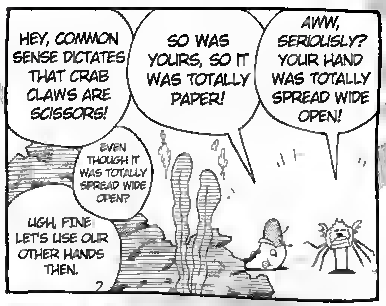


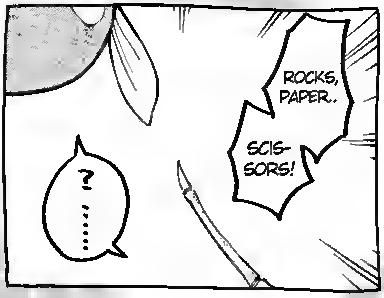
AUTHOR: KEITA AOKI

THE DEFINITION OF "PAPER"

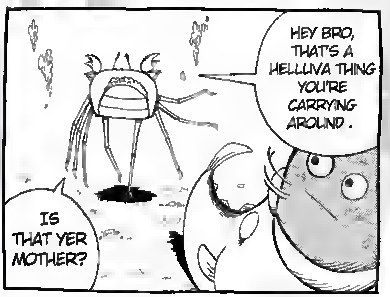


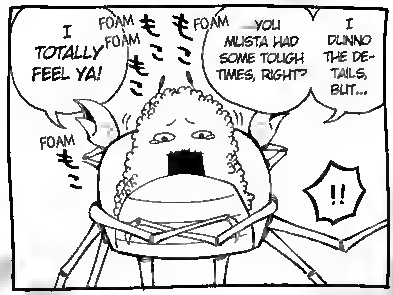


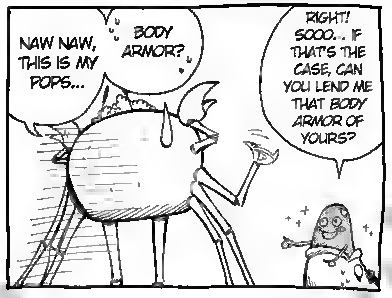

HEY, COMMON SENSE DICTATES THAT CRAB CLAWS ARE SCISSORS!
SO WAS YOURS, SO IT WAS TOTALLY PAPER!
AWW, SERIOUSLY? YOUR HAND WAS TOTALLY SPREAD WIDE OPEN!
EVEN THOUGH IT WAS TOTALLY SPREAD WIDE OPEN?
UGH, FINE LET'S USE OUR OTHER HANDS THEN.
?



A COMRADE ~KANITAMA-KUN AND HIS FATHER~







English Digital Edition
Chapter 007

Sukedachi 09
助太刀09
Seishi Kishimoto

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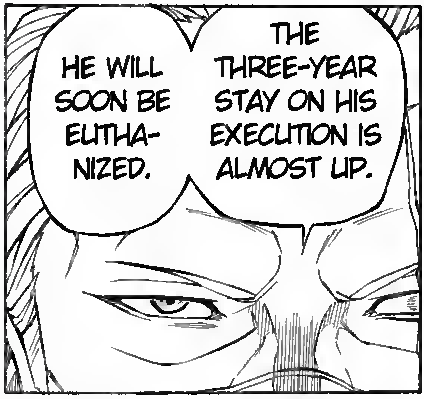
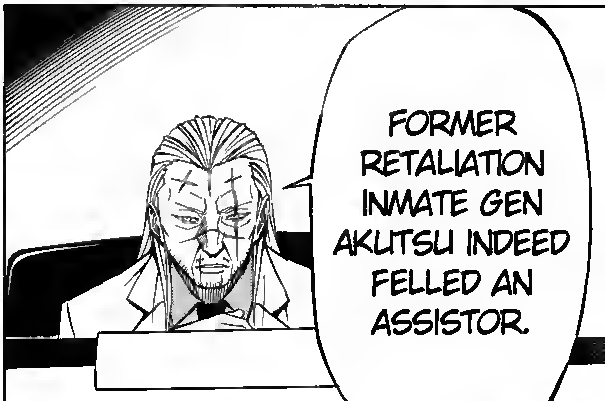
SUKEDACHI NINE
助太刀09

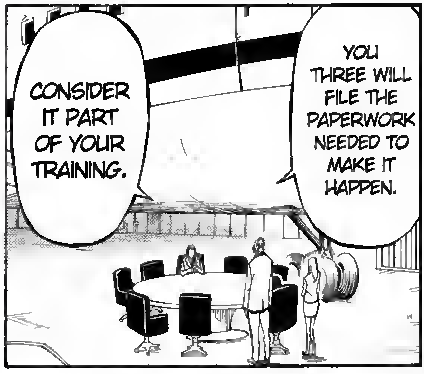
7
SPLATCH
AH HA HA HA HA !!
I DID IT!! I FELLED AN ASSIS-TOR!!
AM-NESTY IS MINE !!
THREE-YEAR AMNESTY! A SOFT EXECU-TION!! THEY'RE BOTH MIIIINE !!

MIRROR:8
"FLOWER"

HASHIBA...
IT'LL SOON BE THREE YEARS TO THE DAY...
羽柴家之墓
THIS LILY MAY EVEN-TUALLY WITHER...
...BUT THE LEGACY YOU LEFT INSIDE ME...
...WILL NEVER FADE.
HASHIBA
羽柴

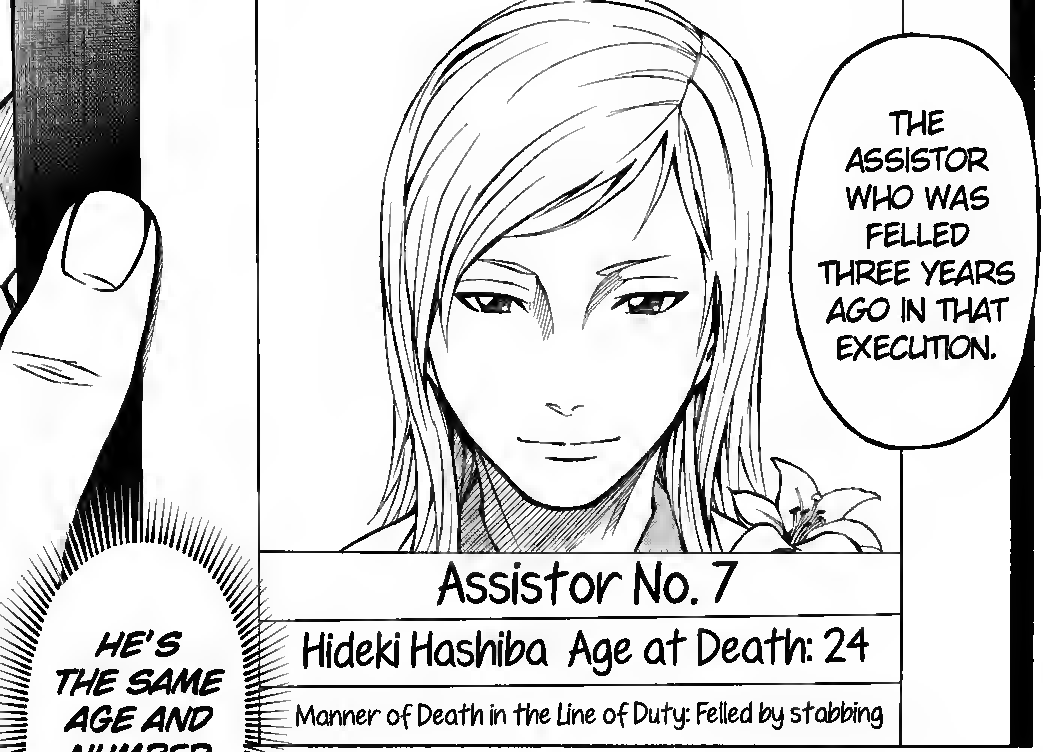




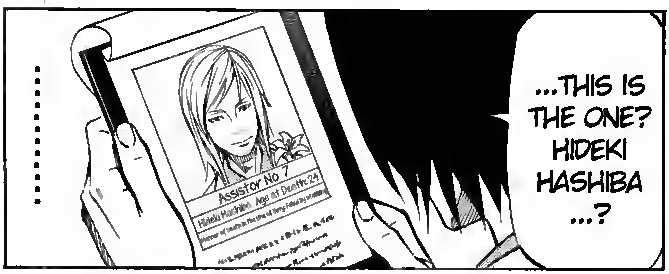


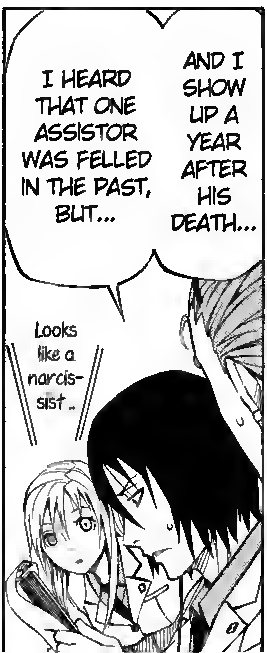
DEATH BY RETALIATION ACT SPECIAL AMNESTY RECIPIENT

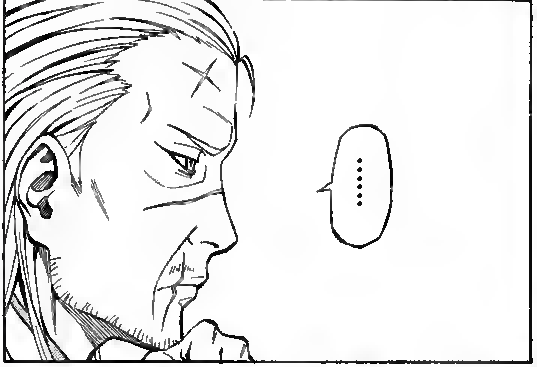
WE CONFIRM--
SPECIAL AMNESTY--
THREE YEARS--


THE ASSISTOR WHO WAS FELLED THREE YEARS AGO IN THAT EXECUTION.
Assistor No. 7
Hideki Hashiba Age at Death: 24
Manner of Death in the Line of Duty: Felled by stabbing
HE'S THE SAME AGE AND NUMBER AS ME...!

Assistor No. 7



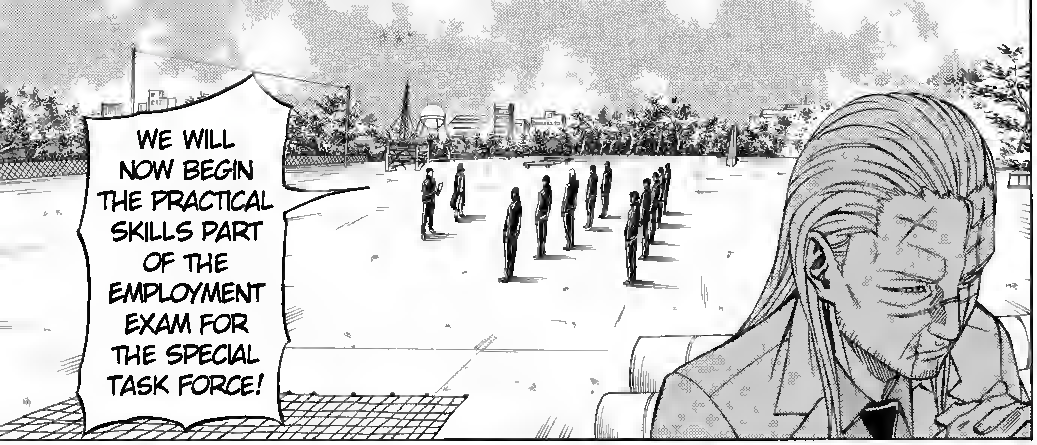


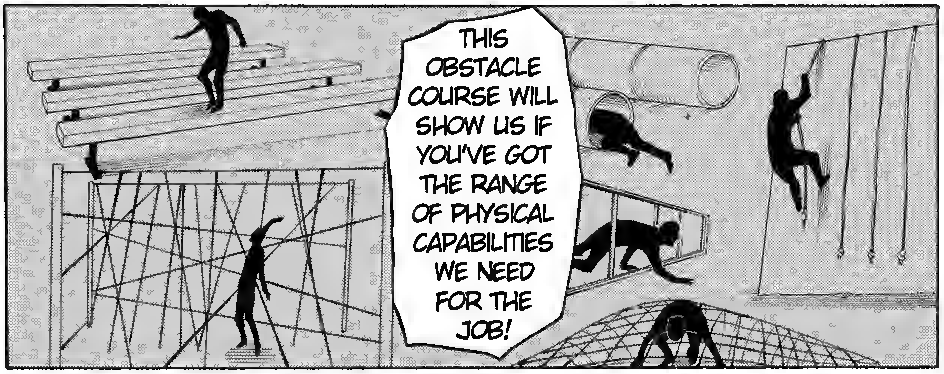

……

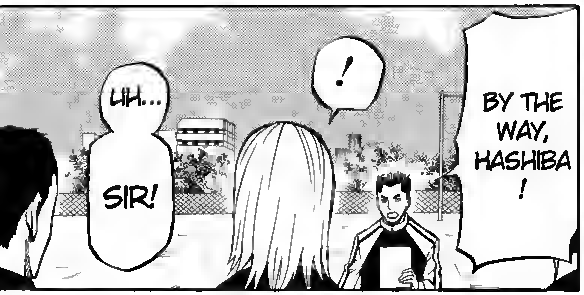
HASHIBA...
...WAS A MAN WHO RESEMBLED A LILY IN MANY WAYS...

……
A LILY...?

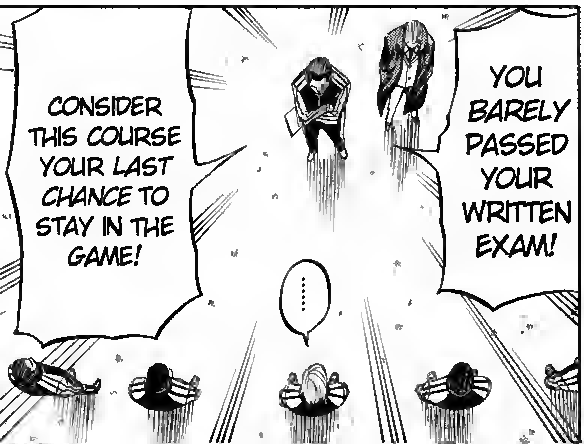
...IT'S NOT JUST THAT...
...I WANT TO KNOW HIM, AS A FELLOW ASSISTOR.


WE WILL NOW BEGIN THE PRACTICAL SKILLS PART OF THE EMPLOYMENT EXAM FOR THE SPECIAL TASK FORCE!


THIS OBSTACLE COURSE WILL SHOW US IF YOU'VE GOT THE RANGE OF PHYSICAL CAPABILITIES WE NEED FOR THE JOB!


BY THE WAY, HASHIBA!
!
UH...
SIR!

IF YOU CLEAR THIS IN 40 SECONDS OR LESS, YOU PASS!

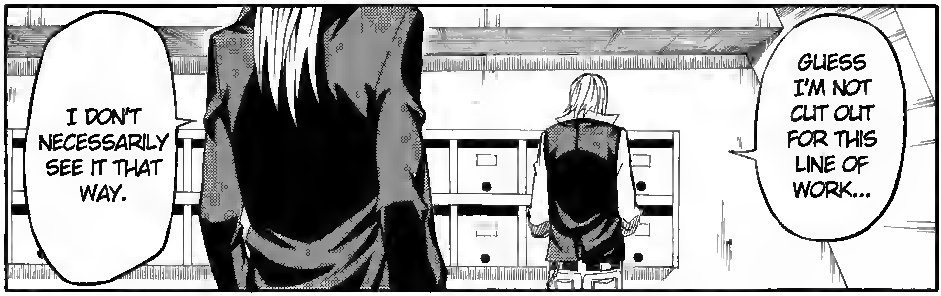

YOU BARELY PASSED YOUR WRITTEN EXAM!
CONSIDER THIS COURSE YOUR LAST CHANCE TO STAY IN THE GAME!
.....

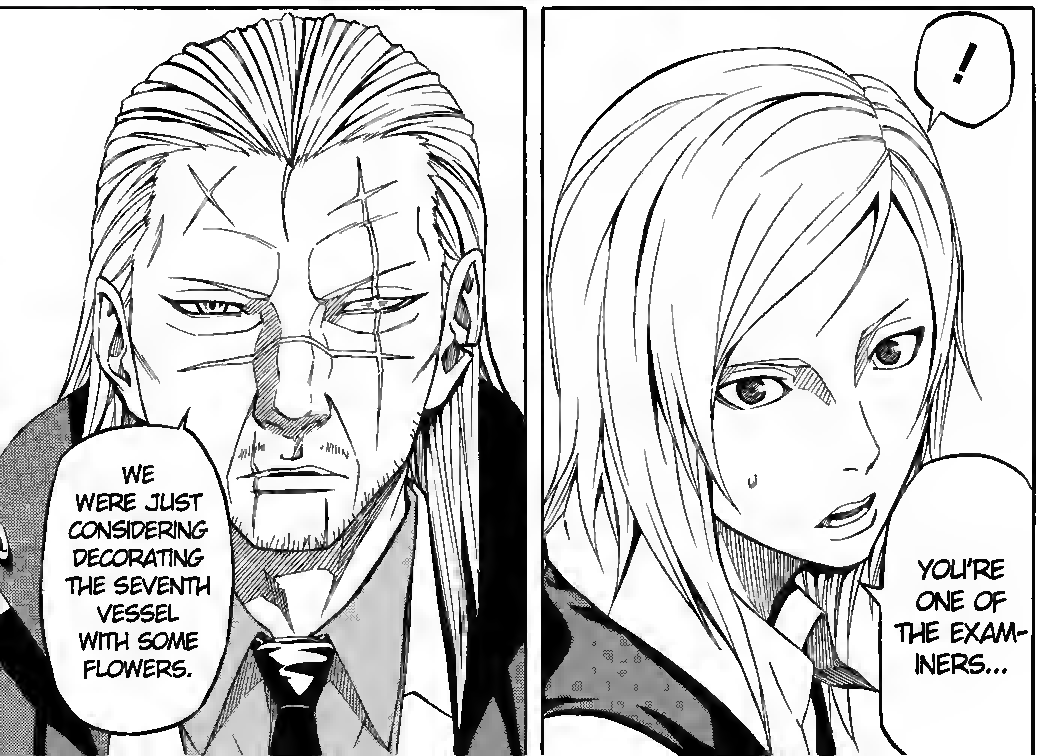
Why does he even have that...?
YES, SIR... I'LL CLEAR THIS EXAM AS GRACEFULLY AS THIS LILY!
FWEEE!
ALL RIGHT, GENTLEMEN! ON YOUR MARK!!
NNGH...
BY THE WAY, THIS FLOWER IS FAKE.
Sorry, folks.
WHAT THE?!

!
SERI-OUSLY ?!
JUMP
JUMP
HOW THE HELL CAN HE RUN THAT FAST?!
THOMP
TUMP
WHAT THE HELL?! OUT OF THE GAME ALREADY ?!
HOLY CRAP !!
TUMP
AUGH, DAMMIT!
HUFF
HUFF
FWEE-EEE
40 SECONDS! TIME'S UP!!
OUTTA THE WAY!
LEAP
HAH! HE'S ALREADY TUCKERED OUT!

LURCH
PHEW...
HA-SHIBA!!
ARE YOU EVEN TAKING THIS SERI-OUSLY?!
DIDN'T WANT TO SEE YOU GET CRUSHED.
THANK GOODNESS.
STAY AS BEAUTIFUL AS YOU ARE.
MMM, YES...

FAILED
HIDEKI HASHIBA
...NOT BEAUTIFUL AT ALL, MAN.
FAILED


I DON'T NECESSARILY SEE IT THAT WAY.
GUESS I'M NOT CUT OUT FOR THIS LINE OF WORK...


WE WERE JUST CONSIDERING DECORATING THE SEVENTH VESSEL WITH SOME FLOWERS.
!
YOU'RE ONE OF THE EXAM-INERS...

HIDEKI HASHIBA, ROOKIE ASSISTOR NO. 7! PLEASE TAKE GOOD CARE OF ME!
A PLEASURE TO MEET EVERYONE HERE!
AND TO DO THAT, I'D LOVE TO MAKE MY WORK BLOSSOM...
IF I MAY BE SO BOLD, I WOULD LIKE TO LIVEN UP THE RATHER STALE ATMOSPHERE IN HERE.
...LIKE A BEAUTIFUL BLOOMING LILY!
HE MUST PRANCE THROUGH MEADOWS OF FLOWERS EVERY DAY IN HIS HEAD.

...?
BY THE WAY, DOES ANYONE KNOW WHAT THE LILY MEANS IN THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS?
DIGNITY...
.....
NOBILITY...
PURITY...
IMPRES-SIVE, CAPTAIN.
YOU EXHIBIT ALL THESE QUALI-TIES.
JUST LIKE ME.
Mm-hmm!
WELL, THOSE ARE THE PRIMARY MEANINGS.
I LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR WORK.

I'VE NEVER SEEN THE CAPTAIN SO PECULIARLY FIXATED TOWARDS ANYONE BEFORE.
THAT MUST SHOW HOW MUCH HASHIBA-SAN MEANS TO HIM...
SENPAI... COULD YOU BE JEALOUS?
ERR...
HE DOES LIKE TO COMPARE THINGS, AFTER ALL.
SH-SHUDDUP YOU TWO!
WE'RE ALMOST THERE!
THE MAN WHO FELLED HASHIBA-SAN...
AND WE'RE ABOUT TO PAY HIM A VISIT...

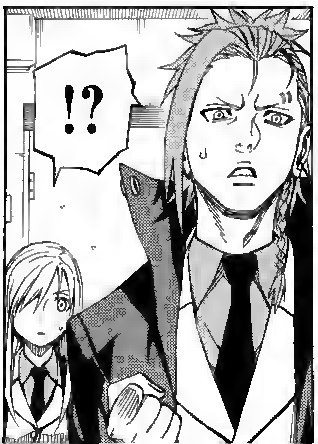
AND YOU'RE GEN AKUTSU, I PRESUME.
YOU'RE ASSISTORS, I BELIEVE ...?
The Darkness Behind Death by ~~tallation

DEATH IS BUT ANOTHER JOURNEY IN LIFE...
THAT'S RIGHT. I'VE USED THESE LAST THREE YEARS TO COME TO TERMS WITH MY IMPENDING DEATH.
I REALLY OUGHT TO THANK HIM, YOU KNOW.
TWITCH
THIS WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE IF THAT ASSISTOR HADN'T DIED FOR ME.
RRGH!
STOP IT, KOUTA!
HEH HEH...
SWAT
DIED FOR YOU, YOU SCUM?!

HE STABBED HIMSELF, AFTER ALL!!
OH, HE DIED FOR ME, ALL RIGHT!

WHAT HAPPENED DURING THAT EXECUTION?!
WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED THREE YEARS AGO?!

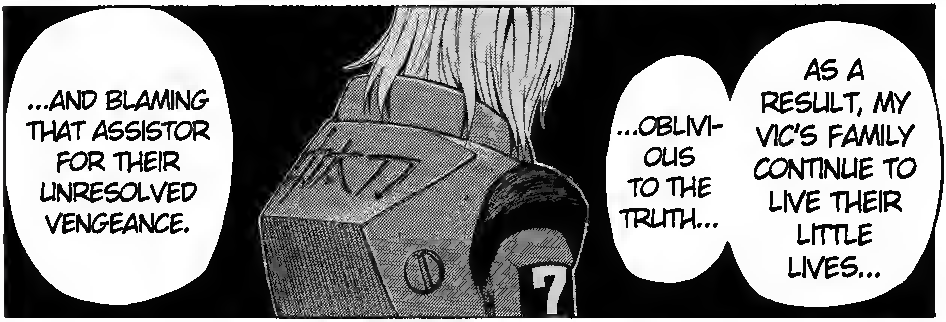
!
HE... STABBED HIMSELF?!

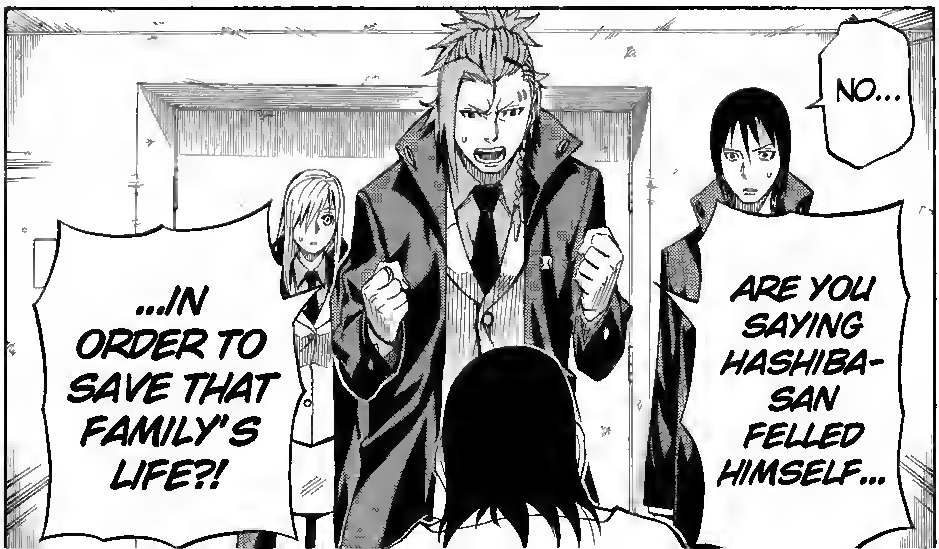

!?

The Darkness Behind Death by Retaliation
WE CALL OURSELVES THE "ADVOCATES AGAINST RETALIATION"...
...SO IT'S OBVIOUS WHY I WOULD GO OUT OF MY WAY TO DESTROY THOSE WHO'RE INVOLVED WITH THE SYSTEM.
...BUTTING HEADS WITH THE ORGANIZATION I WAS WITH.
I'M SURE THE ASSISTORS WILL FIND THEMSELVES...
BUT THOSE KINDS OF EVENTS ARE EXACTLY WHAT WE'RE AFTER.
IT'S A LITTLE IRONIC, DON'T YOU THINK?
THE FACT THAT MY VICTIM'S FAMILY WOULD APPLY TO HAVE ME EXECUTED BY THAT VERY SYSTEM IS A BIT UNEXPECTED, THOUGH.
YOU HEAR THIS, BUDDY?!
IT WAS ALL PART OF THE PLAN...
...TO COBBLE TOGETHER A RADIO FROM PARTS I FOUND AROUND THE ARENA.
I MANAGED TO ESCAPE MY EXECUTIONER'S CLUTCHES LONG ENOUGH...

A COMM LINE OUTSIDE THE ARENA?!
GRIN
ニヤ
BZRRT
...ON THIS BRAT'S HEAD!
RIGHT NOW WE'RE IN POSITION... AND WE HAVE A RIFLE TRAINED...
AND VOLUNTEERED HIS OWN DEATH!!
THAT ASSISTOR PICKED UP ON WHAT WAS HAPPENING...
DURING MY EXECUTION, ONE OF OUR COMRADES LOCATED MY VIC'S FAMILY...
AND JUST AS PLANNED...
...AND TOOK THAT LITTLE KID HOSTAGE.
...ONCE HE FIGURED OUT WHAT WAS GOING ON.
CLICK
OH, BUT IT WAS A PITY THAT HE TURNED OFF HIS MIC...

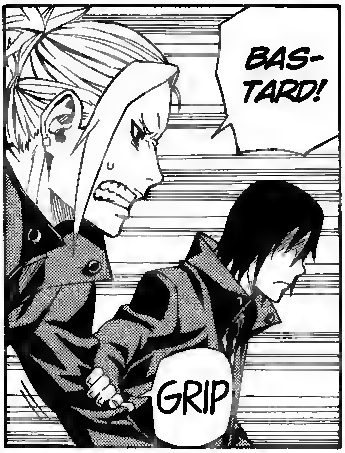
OHH, THOSE PEOPLE IN THE OBSERVANCE ROOM...
...NEEDED TO TASTE THE FEAR A LITTLE MORE...


AS A RESULT, MY VIC'S FAMILY CONTINUE TO LIVE THEIR LITTLE LIVES...
...OBLIVI-OUS TO THE TRUTH...
...AND BLAMING THAT ASSISTOR FOR THEIR UNRESOLVED VENGEANCE.


NO...
ARE YOU SAYING HASHIBA-SAN FELLED HIMSELF...
...IN ORDER TO SAVE THAT FAMILY'S LIFE?!

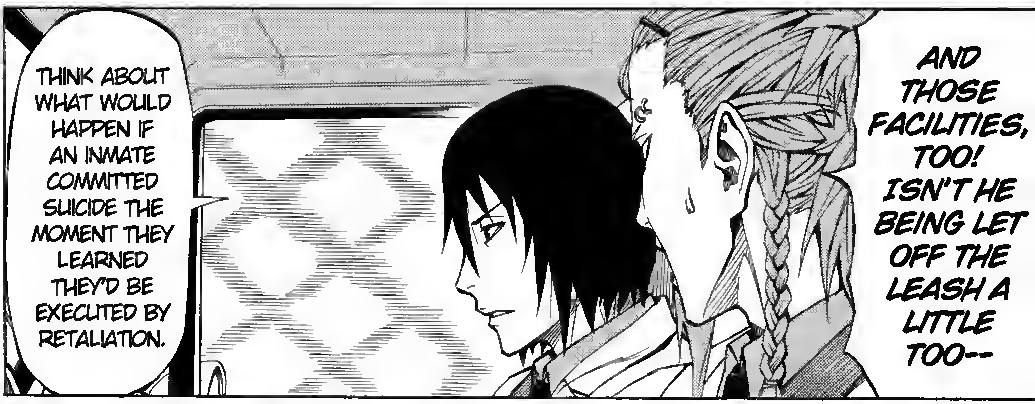
THAT KID... HE CALLED HIMSELF NO. 7, RIGHT?
GOOD FOR ME, BECAUSE HE TURNED OUT TO BE MY LUCKY SEVEN.
Heh heh!

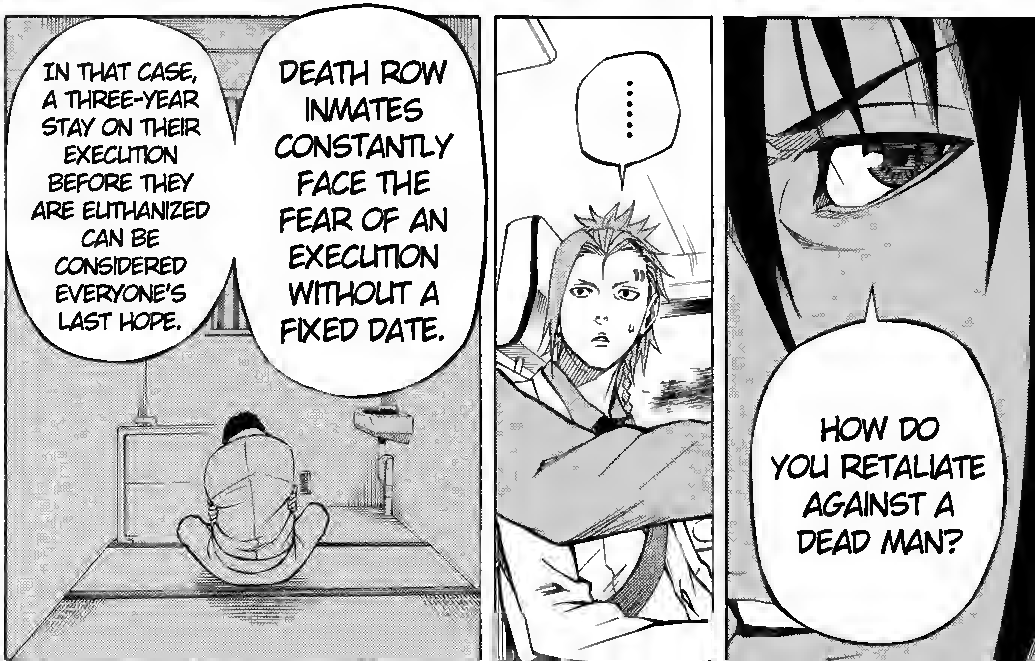
...YOUR EXECUTION WILL BE THREE DAYS FROM NOW.
UNTIL THEN, I SINCERELY HOPE THAT YOU FACE AND REFLECT UPON YOUR SINS.

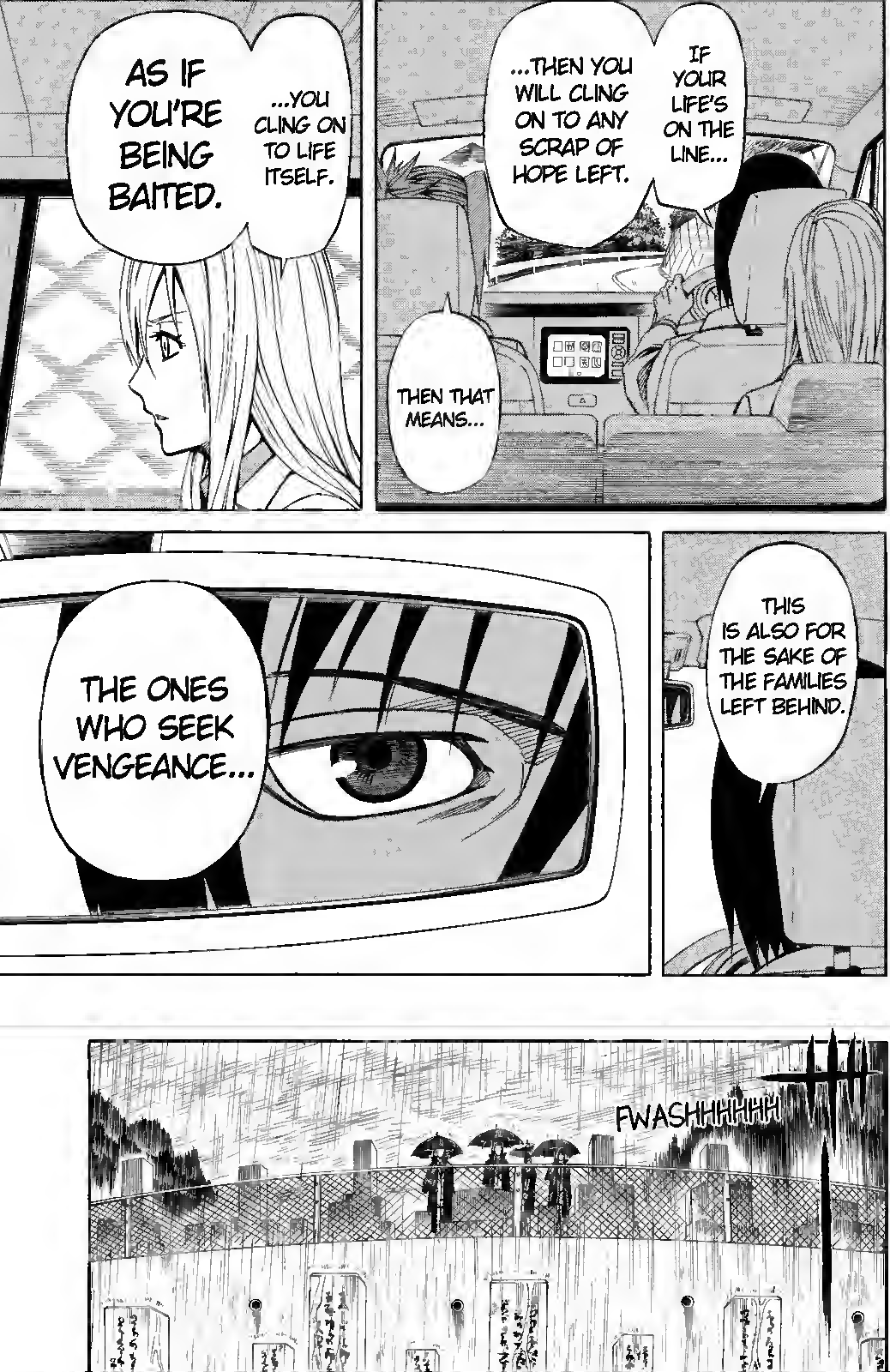

BAS-TARD!
GRIP

AND I MEAN IT.

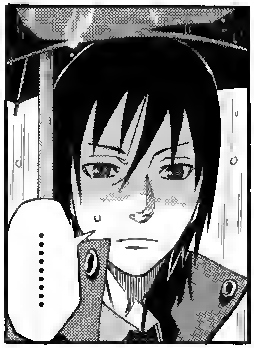
THREE YEARS' AMNESTY AND A SOFT EXECUTION IS WAY TOO LENIENT!
WHY'S A BASTARD LIKE HIM RECEIVING SPECIAL TREATMENT FOR FELLING AN EXECUTIONER?!
DAM-MIT!


THINK ABOUT WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF AN INMATE COMMITTED SUICIDE THE MOMENT THEY LEARNED THEY'D BE EXECUTED BY RETALIATION.
AND THOSE FACILITIES, TOO! ISN'T HE BEING LET OFF THE LEASH A LITTLE TOO--


IN THAT CASE, A THREE-YEAR STAY ON THEIR EXECUTION BEFORE THEY ARE EUTHANIZED CAN BE CONSIDERED EVERYONE'S LAST HOPE.
DEATH ROW INMATES CONSTANTLY FACE THE FEAR OF AN EXECUTION WITHOUT A FIXED DATE.
.....
HOW DO YOU RETALIATE AGAINST A DEAD MAN?


AS IF YOU'RE BEING BAITED.
...YOU CLING ON TO LIFE ITSELF.
IF YOUR LIFE'S ON THE LINE...
...THEN YOU WILL CLING ON TO ANY SCRAP OF HOPE LEFT.
THEN THAT MEANS...
THE ONES WHO SEEK VENGEANCE...
THIS IS ALSO FOR THE SAKE OF THE FAMILIES LEFT BEHIND.
FWASHHHHHH

CAPTAIN... YOU'VE BEEN VISITING THE GRAVES OF THE VICTIMS EVERY YEAR, HAVEN'T YOU?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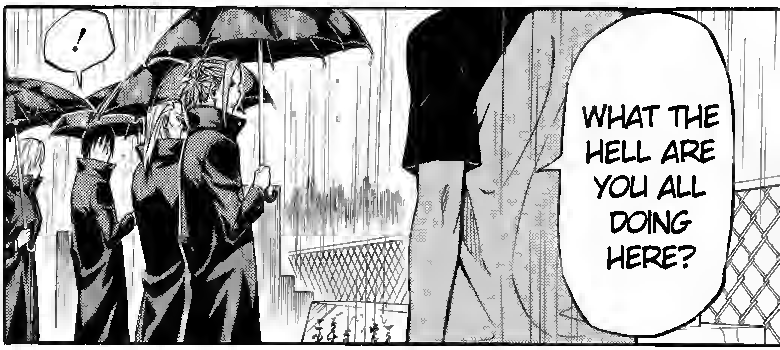
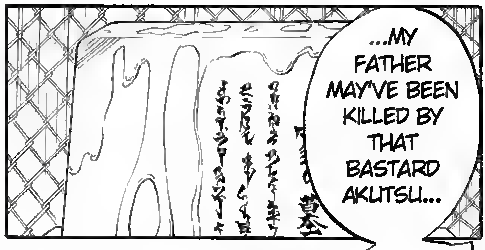
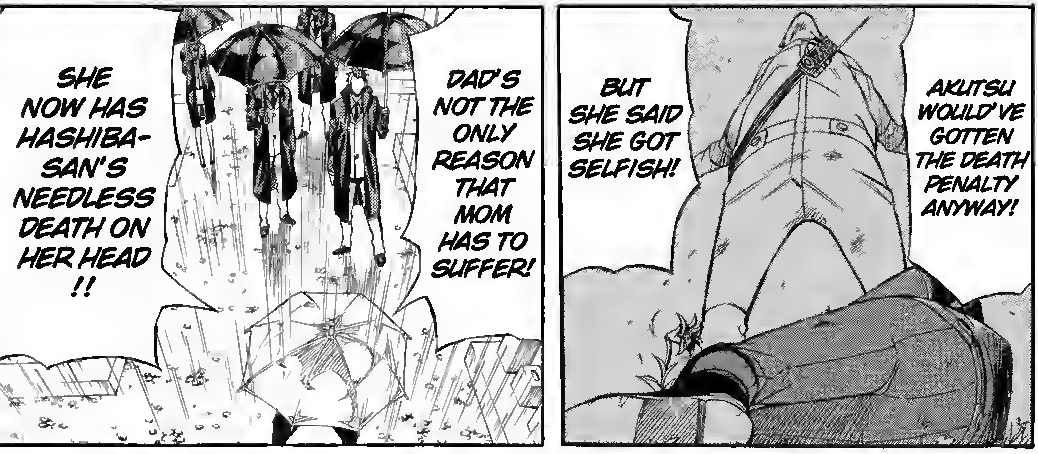

!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU ALL DOING HERE?

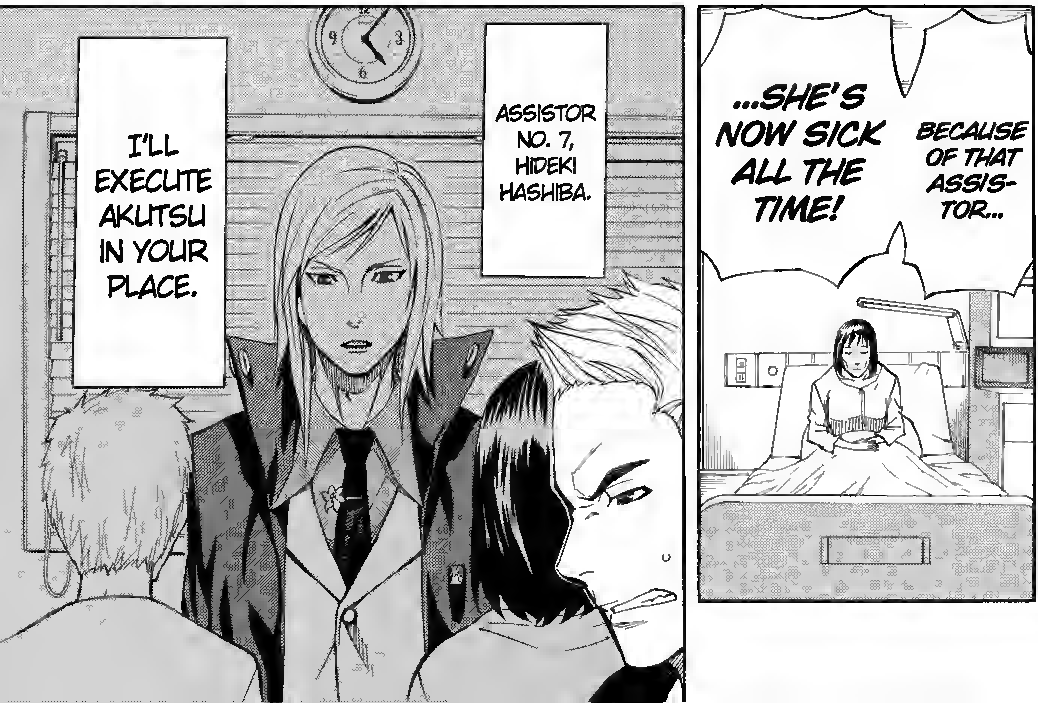

...MY FATHER MAY'VE BEEN KILLED BY THAT BASTARD AKUTSU...

...BUT THE ONES WHO'RE SUFFOCATING MY MOTHER AND ME...
...ARE THE ASSISTORS!

GO HOME ALREADY!

IF SHE HADN'T ASKED FOR RETALIATION, THEN HE WOULDN'T HAVE NEEDED TO GET HIMSELF KILLED!
MOM TOLD ME WHEN HASHI-BA-SAN GOT FELLED!
.....


SHE NOW HAS HASHIBA-SAN'S NEEDLESS DEATH ON HER HEAD !!
DAD'S NOT THE ONLY REASON THAT MOM HAS TO SUFFER!
BUT SHE SAID SHE GOT SELFISH!
AKUTSU WOULD'VE GOTTEN THE DEATH PENALTY ANYWAY!


I'LL EXECUTE AKUTSU IN YOUR PLACE.
ASSISTOR NO. 7, HIDEKI HASHIBA.
...SHE'S NOW SICK ALL THE TIME!
BECAUSE OF THAT ASSIS-TOR...

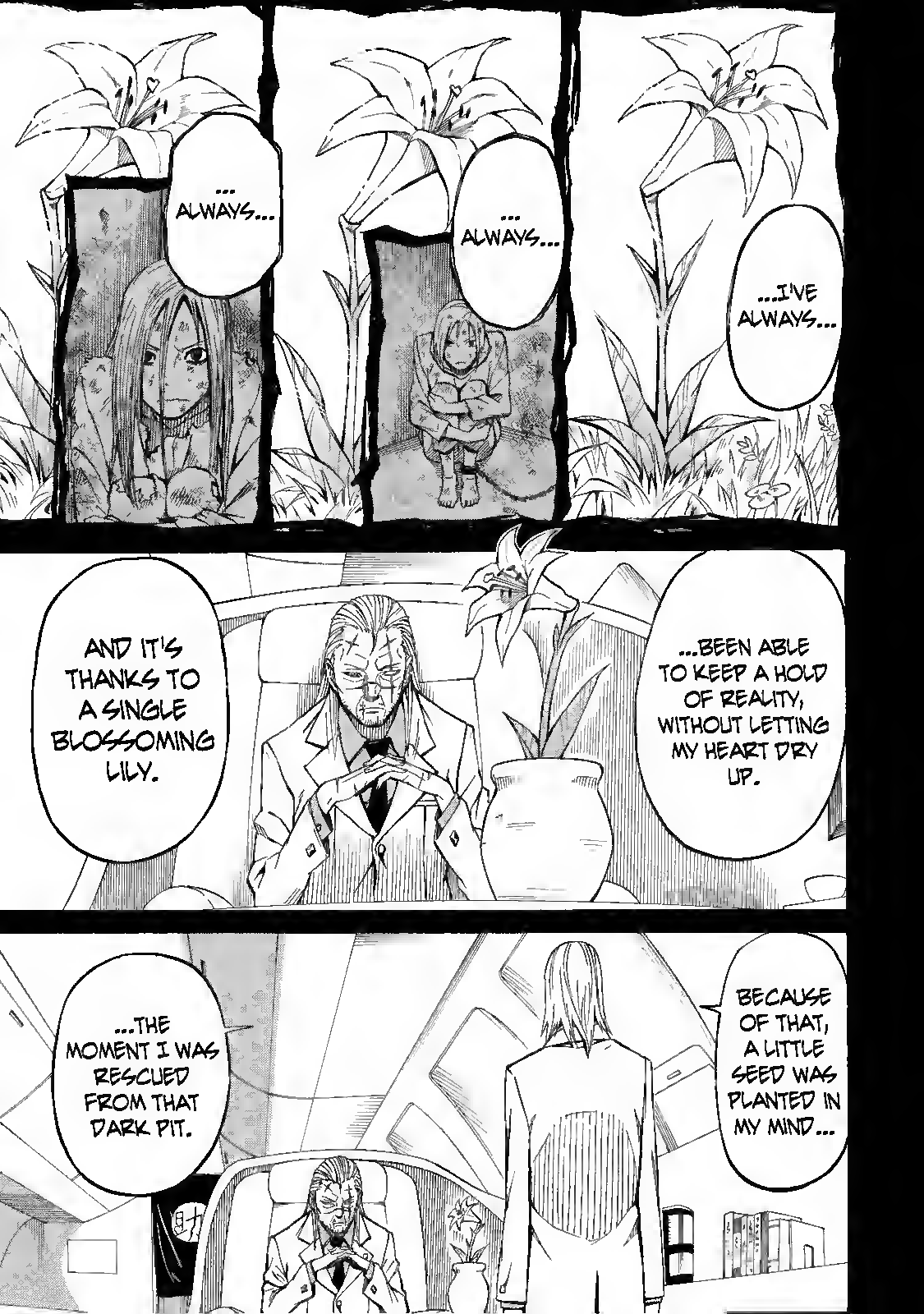
...YOUR EYES HAD A BEAUTIFUL SHINE TO THEM.
.....!
I ALREADY KNOW JUST BY LOOKING AT YOU...
BEFORE THIS HAP-PENED...
Y-YOU THINK?
...WHAT A CORNY LINE.

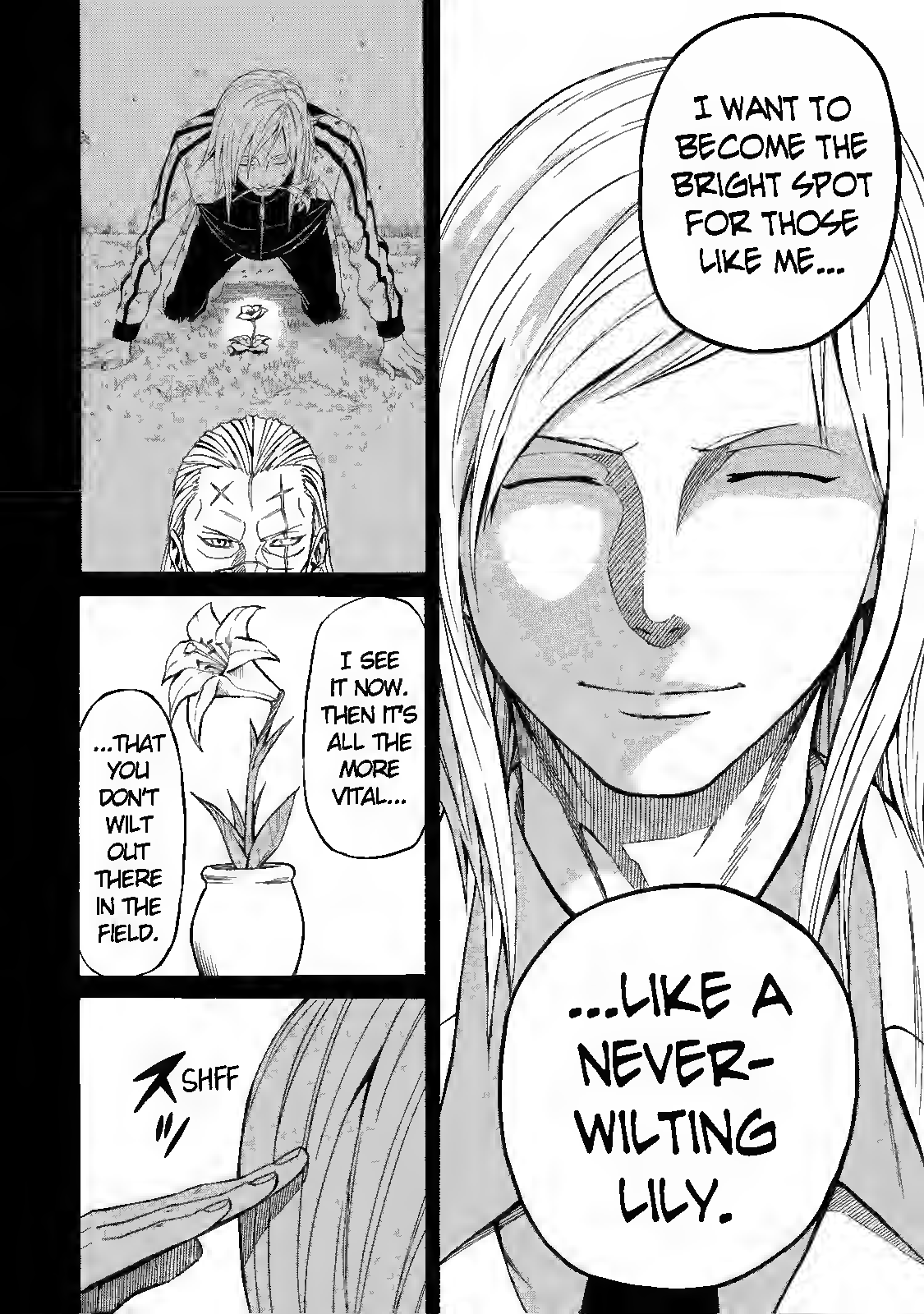
...YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT.
HE SAID HE EMPATHIZED WITH US VICTIMS, BUT IT WAS ALL TALK.
THAT'S WHY HE GOT FELLED.
HASHIBA-SAN WAS TRYING TO...
STOP, YUUJI!
HE DOESN'T KNOW THE TRUTH. AKUTSU WASN'T LYING...
...AS LEADER OF THE ASSIS-TORS...
...ALL RESPON-SIBILITY LIES WITH ME.
SHFF
CAP-TAIN?!

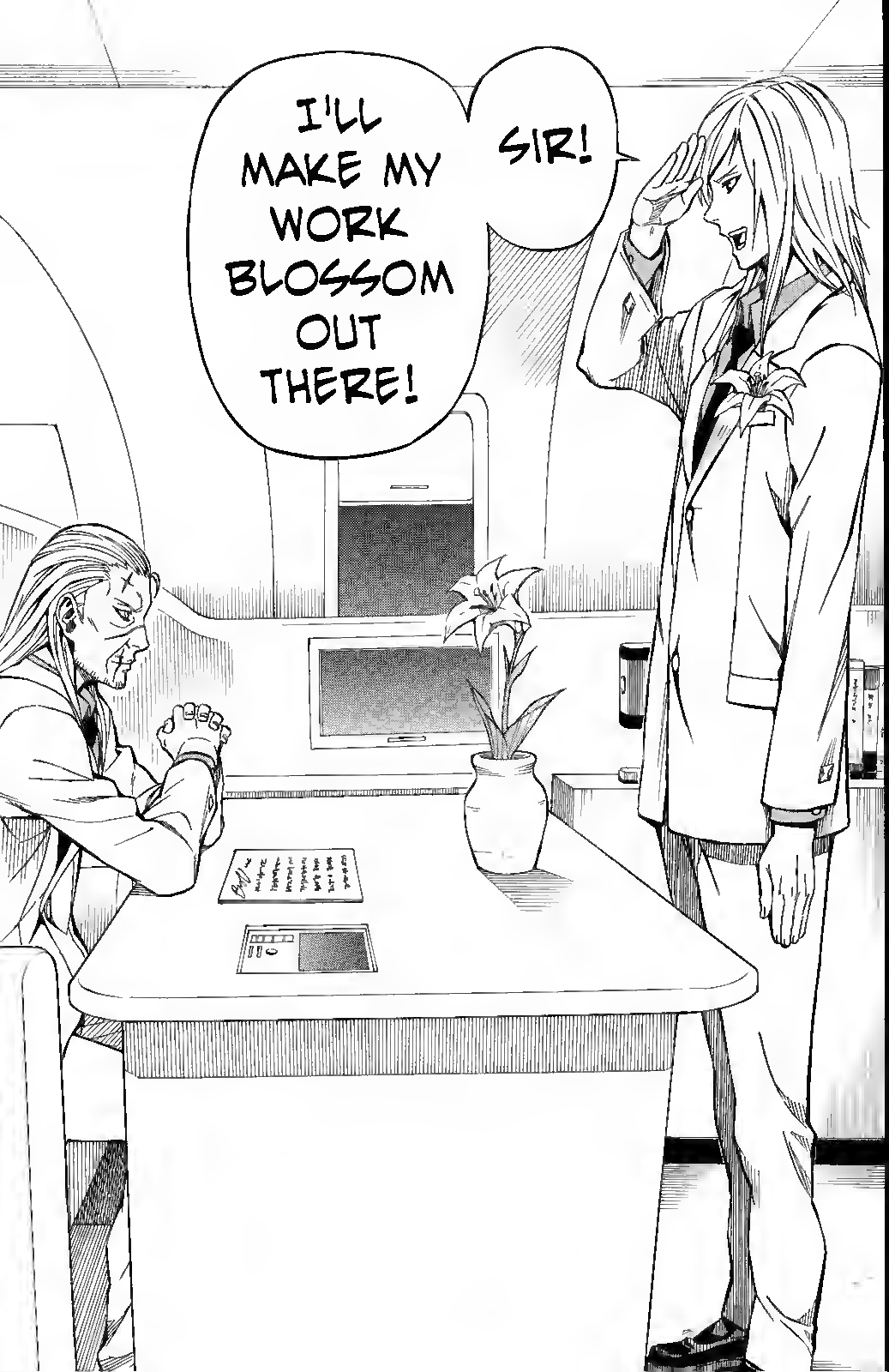
PLEASE, DO NOT SPEAK ILL OF HASHIBA.
BUT I BEG OF YOU FOR ONE THING ALONE...

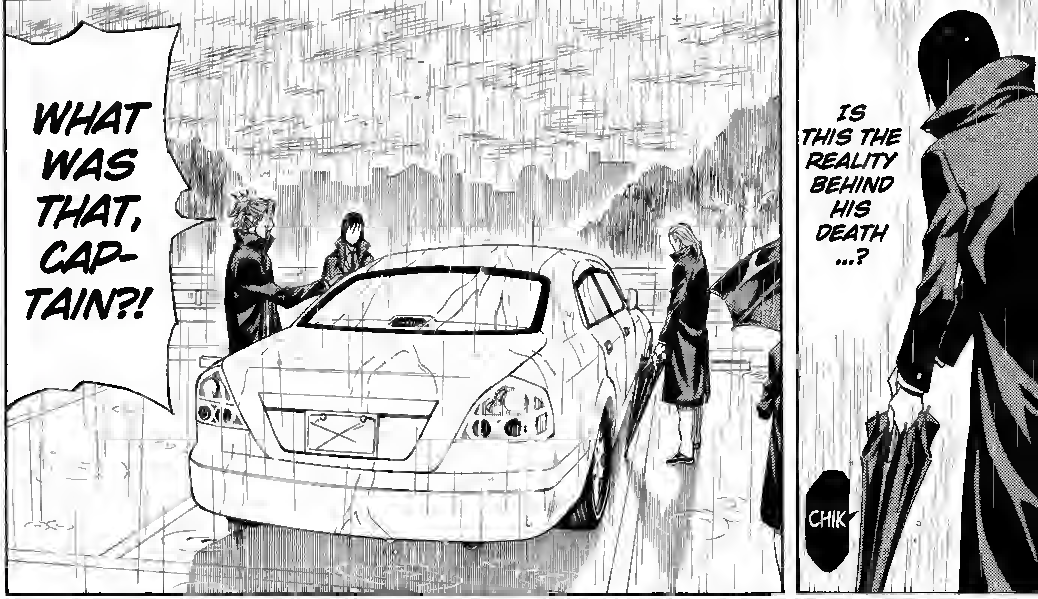
YOU SEEM VERY WELL-VERSED IN FLOWERS, CAPTAIN.
ARE YOU FOND OF THEM?
NO, I JUST KNOW ABOUT THEM.
I DON'T HOLD THE SORTS OF ROMANTIC IDEAS ABOUT THEM THAT YOU DO.
.....
...FLOWERS AREN'T ROMANTIC, SIR.
THEY REPRE-SENT REALITY ITSELF.
I WAS ABDUCTED AFTER MY PARENTS WERE KILLED.
THEY TOOK ME TO A DARK, FILTH-RIDDEN WORLD, WHERE YOU COULD NOT TELL WHAT WAS REAL AND WHAT WASN'T...
KREEEEE
FIRST MEAL IN THREE DAYS, PUNK.
SPLORTCH & SPLORTCH
HAH! THAT'S IT, BOY! LICK IT UP LIKE THE DOG YOU ARE!
GHFF NNGH
YOU REALLY ARE A PIECE OF CRAP! HA HA HA!!

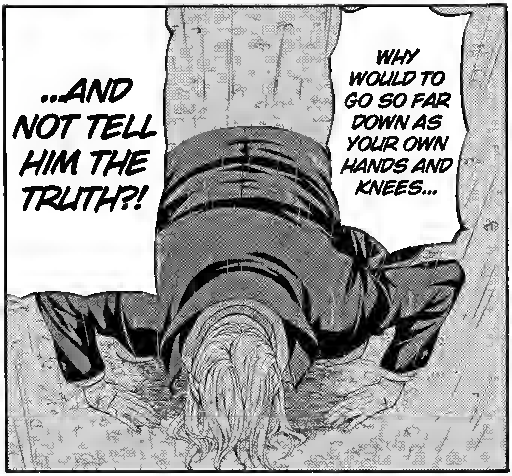
!
DAD...
MOM...
キィイイ~.
KREEEE
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO LOOK LIKE A DEAD, STINKING FISH BY NOW!
WHAT'S UP WITH THOSE EYES, PUNK?!
IN THAT TWISTED WORLD...
ハァ!
SLAM
FINE! NO FOOD FOR YOU TODAY!!

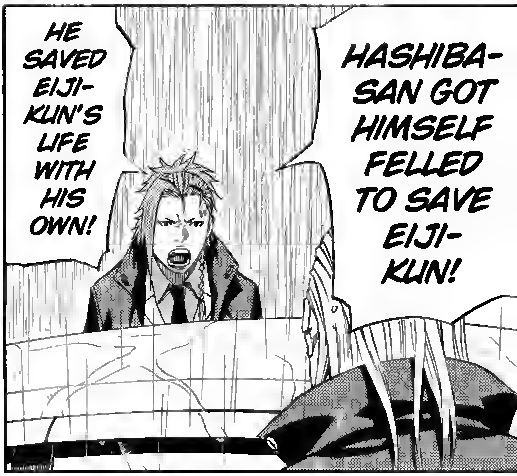

...ALWAYS...
...ALWAYS...
...I'VE ALWAYS...
AND IT'S THANKS TO A SINGLE BLOSSOMING LILY.
...BEEN ABLE TO KEEP A HOLD OF REALITY, WITHOUT LETTING MY HEART DRY UP.
...THE MOMENT I WAS RESCUED FROM THAT DARK PIT.
BECAUSE OF THAT, A LITTLE SEED WAS PLANTED IN MY MIND...

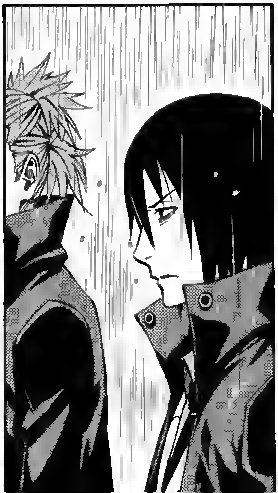

I WANT TO BECOME THE BRIGHT SPOT FOR THOSE LIKE ME...
...LIKE A NEVER-WILTING LILY.
I SEE IT NOW. THEN IT'S ALL THE MORE VITAL...
...THAT YOU DON'T WILT OUT THERE IN THE FIELD.
SHFF


I'LL MAKE MY WORK BLOSSOM OUT THERE!
SIR!


WHAT WAS THAT, CAP-TAIN?!
IS THIS THE REALITY BEHIND HIS DEATH ...?
CHIK

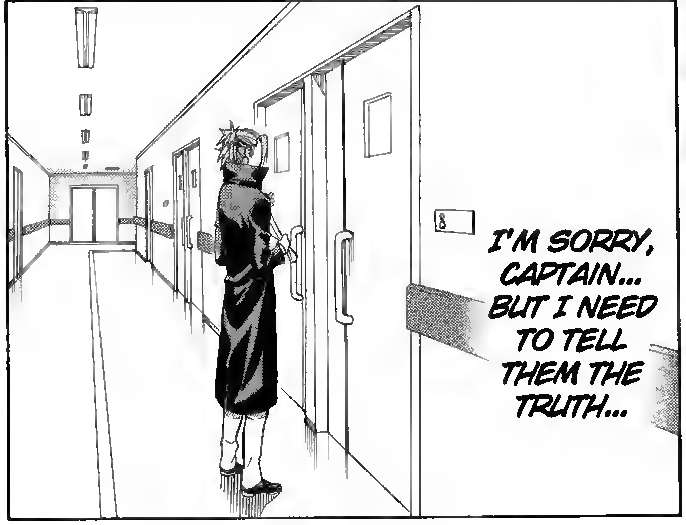

...AND NOT TELL HIM THE TRUTH?!
WHY WOULD TO GO SO FAR DOWN AS YOUR OWN HANDS AND KNEES...


HE SAVED EIJI-KUN'S LIFE WITH HIS OWN!
HASHIBA-SAN GOT HIMSELF FELLED TO SAVE EIJI-KUN!



IT'S LIKE HE DIED FOR NOTHING...
IT'S TOO CRUEL TO HASHIBA-SAN...

HASHIBA...
...TRIED TO BECOME THE BRIGHT FLOWER IN THAT FAMILY'S LIFE.
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?!
THE BRIGHT FLOWER ?!
THAT'S RIGHT... I'M SURE EIJI-KUN WOULD'VE UNDERSTOOD IF WE TOLD HIM THE TRUTH.
IT WOULD CERTAINLY CLEAR HASHIBA-SAN'S NAME...
WHAT IS THE CAPTAIN TRYING TO TELL US?!


I'M SORRY, CAPTAIN... BUT I NEED TO TELL THEM THE TRUTH...

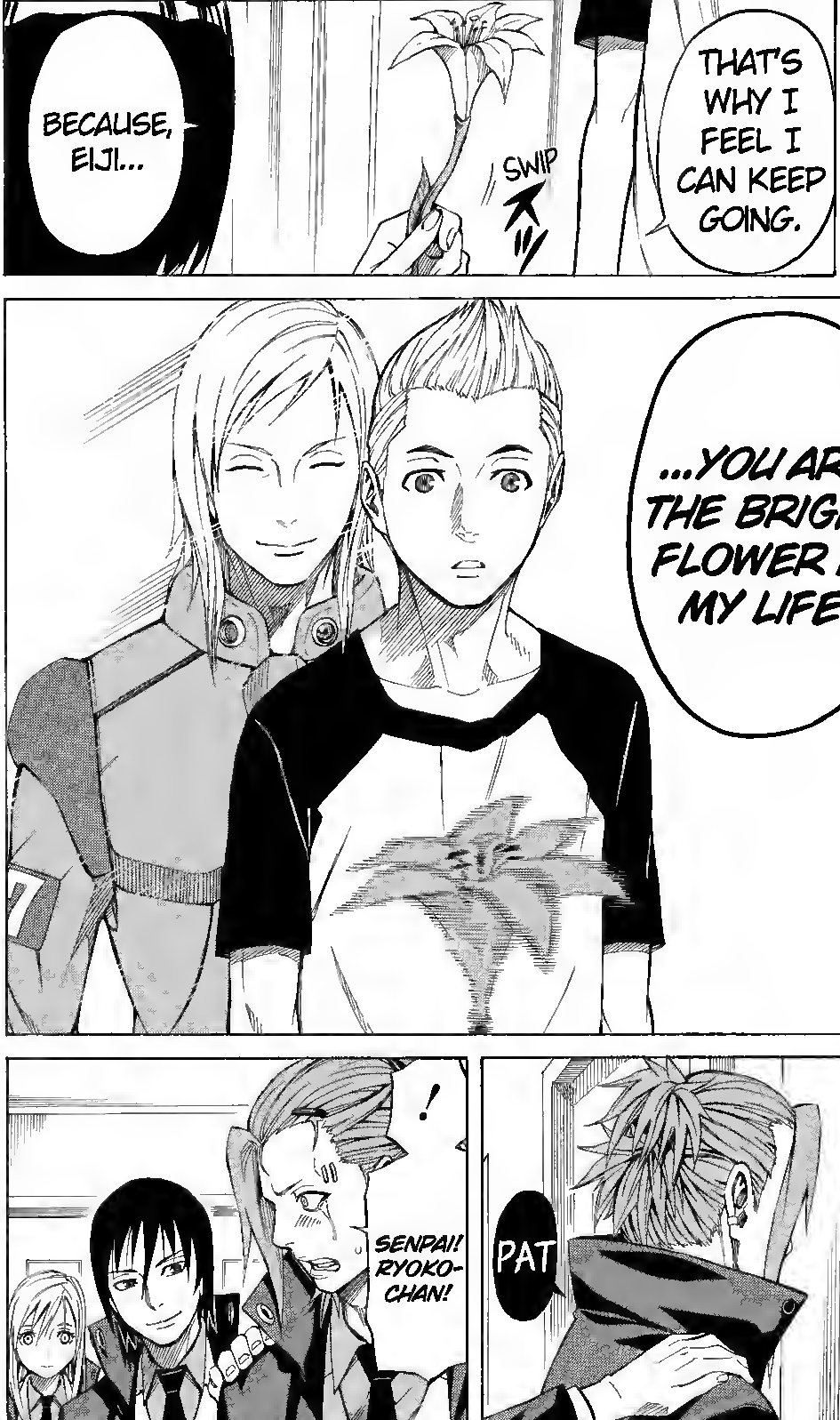
西川総合病

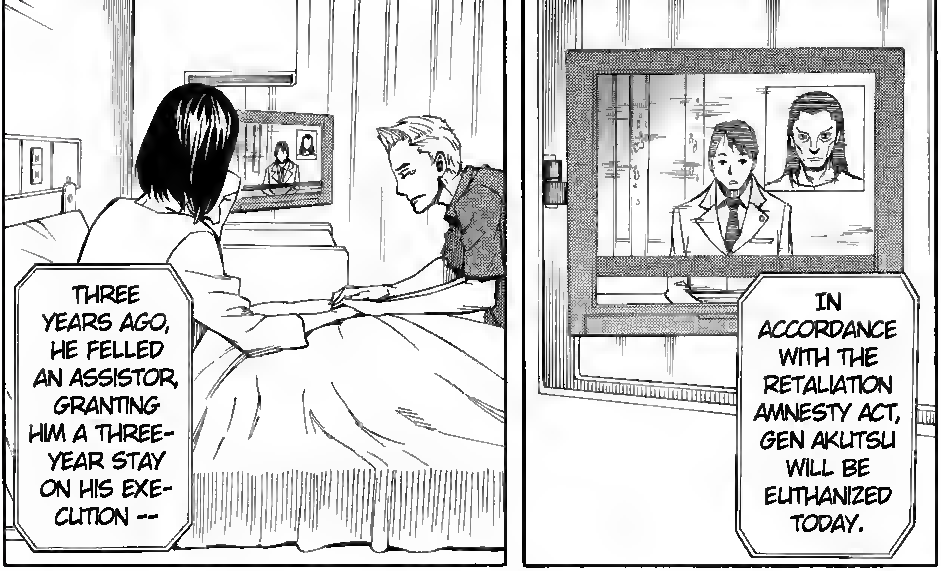
ANY BUM OFF THE STREETS CAN KOWTOW TO US IN APOLOGY...
...FOR MAKING YOU SUFFER.

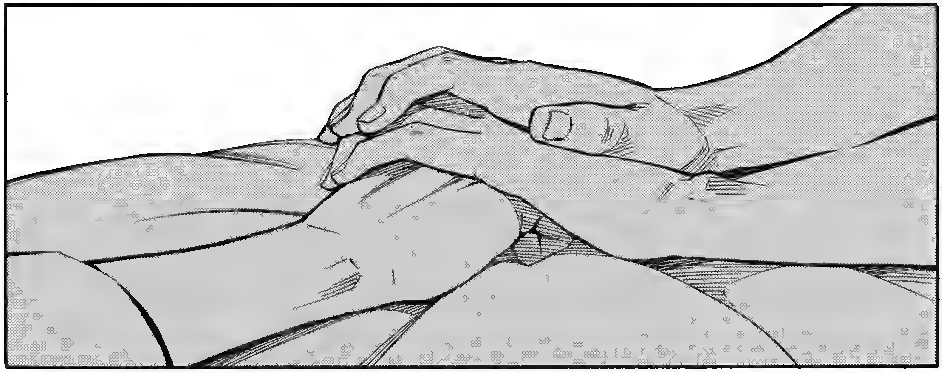
OH...
THOSE ASSISTOR BASTARDS VISITED DAD'S GRAVE TODAY.
SNUFF

...WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE US?
BUT EVEN IF AKUTSU GOT EUTHANIZED NOW...

...HE SAID HE'D BECOME THE BRIGHT FLOWER FOR US, JUST LIKE THESE...
WHEN HASHIBA-SAN BECAME OUR PROXY...
THESE FLOWERS ARE BEAUTIFUL.
TOUCH
!?
...PARENTS BECOME SO MUCH STRONGER.
WHEN CHILDREN ARE SIMPLY THERE FOR THEIR PARENTS...
I TOLD YOU THAT WAS JUST TALK.
FLOWER ?!
I STILL REGRET THAT I ASKED FOR A RETALIATORY EXECUTION FROM TIME TO TIME.
WHA-- WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
THAT'S WHY I'M HERE TOO.
BUT EIJI, YOU'RE STILL HERE WITH ME.

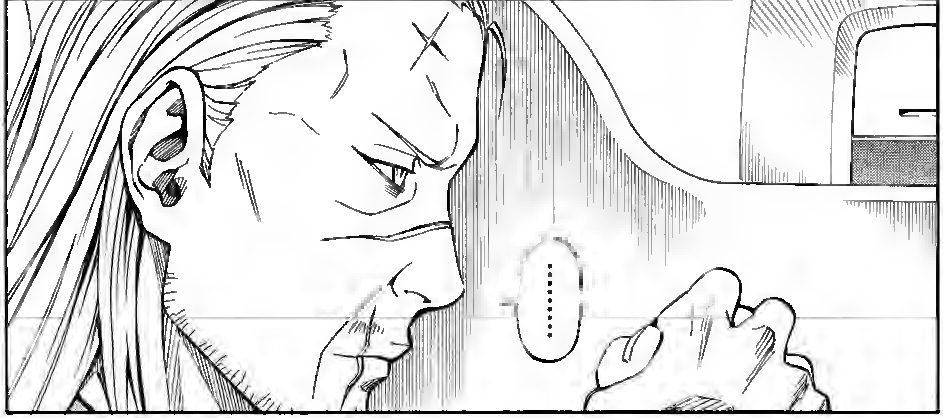

BECAUSE, EIJI...
SWIP
THAT'S WHY I FEEL I CAN KEEP GOING.
...YOU ARE THE BRIGHT FLOWER IN MY LIFE.
!
SENPAI! RYOKO-CHAN!
PAT


THREE YEARS AGO, HE FELLED AN ASSISTOR, GRANTING HIM A THREE-YEAR STAY ON HIS EXECUTION --
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RETALIATION AMNESTY ACT, GEN AKUTSU WILL BE EUTHANIZED TODAY.

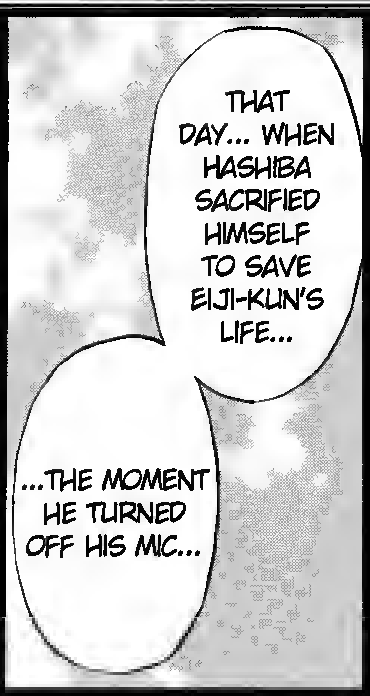


...WHAT HASHIBA-SAN WAS TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH.
I BELIEVE WE FINALLY UNDERSTAND, SIR...

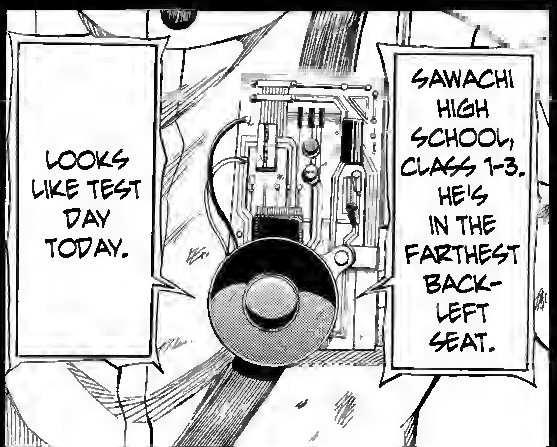
...BUT TO ENSURE THAT NO MORE SUFFERING BEFALLS THEM.
7
...ISN'T SIMPLY TO UNDERSTAND THE VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES...
THE DUTY OF AN AS-SISTOR...
...WHEN HE WANTED TO BECOME "LIKE A LILY" TO THESE FAMILIES.
7
I BELIEVE THIS IS WHAT HASHIBA-SAN MEANT...


.....

YOU HEAR THIS, BUDDY?!


THAT DAY... WHEN HASHIBA SACRIFIED HIMSELF TO SAVE EIJI-KUN'S LIFE...
...THE MOMENT HE TURNED OFF HIS MIC...

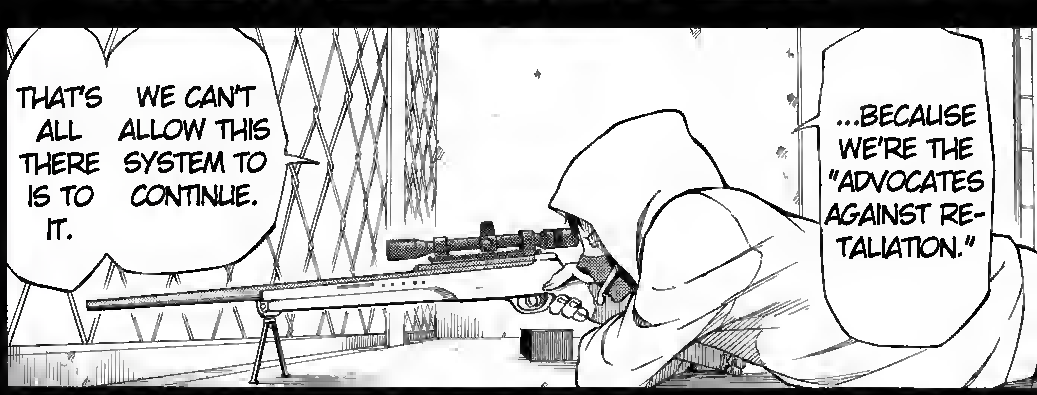
A COMM LINE OUT-SIDE THE ARENA?!
GRIN
ニヤ
BIRRT

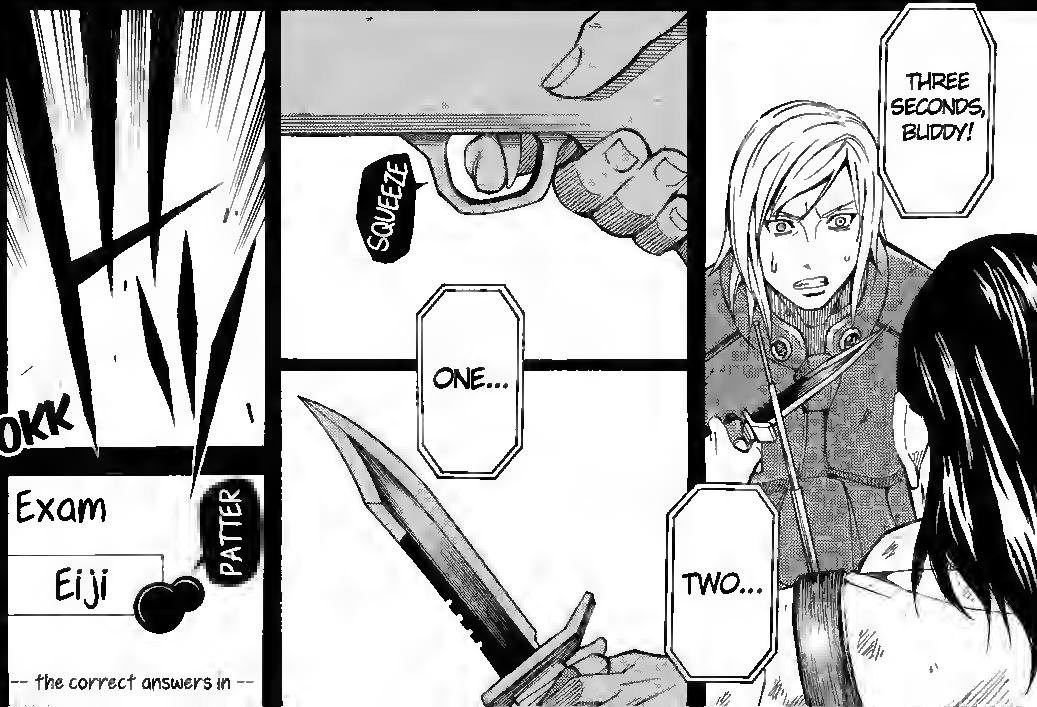

LOOKS LIKE TEST DAY TODAY.
SAWACHI HIGH SCHOOL, CLASS 1-3. HE'S IN THE FARTHEST BACK-LEFT SEAT.

RIGHT NOW WE'RE IN POSITION... AND WE HAVE A RIFLE TRAINED...
...ON THIS BRAT'S HEAD!
!
WHAT ?!
THERE'S NO SOUND ...!!
BZRRT
CLICK

HA HA!
BUT THAT LITTLE KID'S GONNA HAVE MORE THAN FAILING MARKS ON HIM IF YOU DO.
IT'S FINE IF YOU THINK WE'RE LYING.
DID HE SWITCH COMM LINKS SO ONLY I CAN LISTEN IN...?
HASHI-BA...
?
WHISPER
...OVER TO THE CLASSROOM RIGHT NOW!
I HEAR YOU! I'M SENDING OUR GUARDS POSTED AT THE SCHOOL...
CAPTAIN! SEND GUARDS TO PROTECT EIJI NOW!
YOU'RE A CHEATING BASTARD TO THE END!!

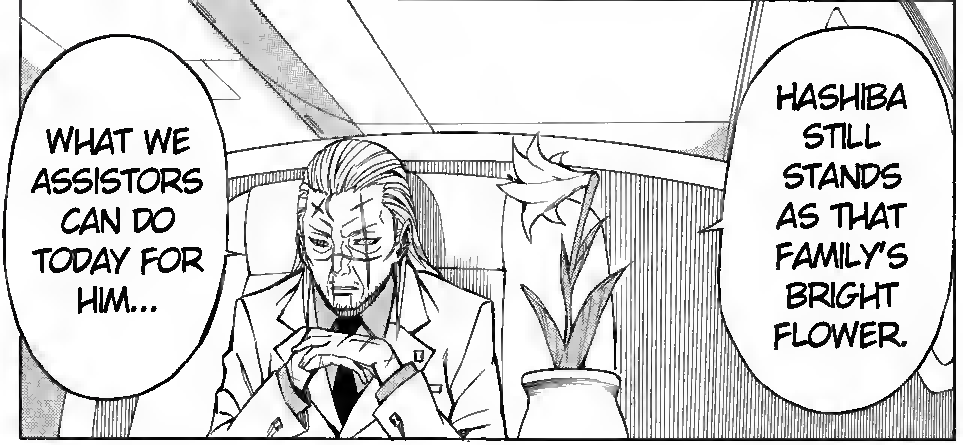
NNGH!
WHY SHOULD WE BELIEVE YOU?!
OR DO WE SPARE THE KID'S ?!
DO WE SPARE THE ASSISTOR'S LIFE...?
TOO LATE, BUB. YOU'VE GOT TEN SECONDS TO DECIDE.

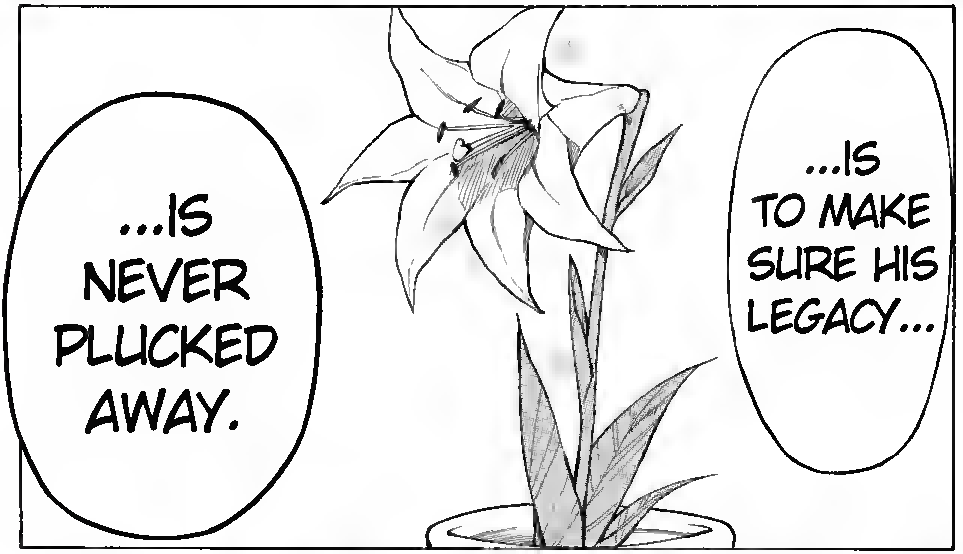

THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT.
WE CAN'T ALLOW THIS SYSTEM TO CONTINUE.
...BECAUSE WE'RE THE "ADVOCATES AGAINST RETALIATION."


THOKK
Exam
PATTER
Eiji
-- the correct answers in --
SQUEEZE
ONE...
TWO...
THREE SECONDS, BUDDY!

MY NOSE?!
C... CAP-TAIN...
PLEASE... DON'T TELL THEM...
...THAT... I STABBED MYSELF...
HASHI-BA!!

OTHERWISE... THE PRESSURE... OF MY DEATH...
BZRRT
SAY... THAT I WAS FELLED...
...HE'S GOT...
...BEAU-TIFUL...
... EYES...
... AFTER ALL...
...THE SPARK...
... MIGHT... TAKE AWAY...
...IN ... EIJI'S EYES ...
HGK AK!
... PL ...
... ME ...
... MISE ...
PRO...

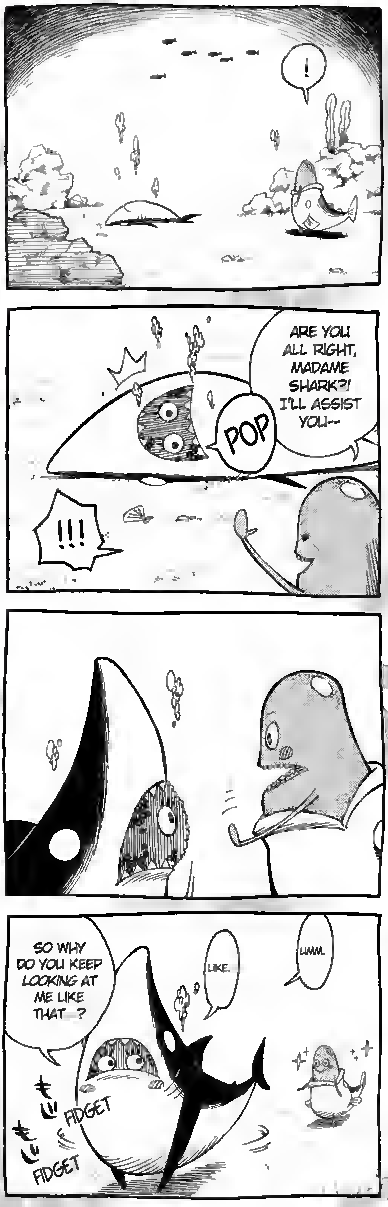

WHAT WE ASSISTORS CAN DO TODAY FOR HIM...
HASHIBA STILL STANDS AS THAT FAMILY'S BRIGHT FLOWER.


...IS TO MAKE SURE HIS LEGACY...
...IS NEVER PLUCKED AWAY.

YES, SIR!!

.....
SHIFF...
SHUFF
TPP

A Comrade ~Cavianne-chan and Mom~



Migratory Fish

English Digital Edition
Chapter 008

Sukedachi 09
助太刀09
Seishi Kishimoto

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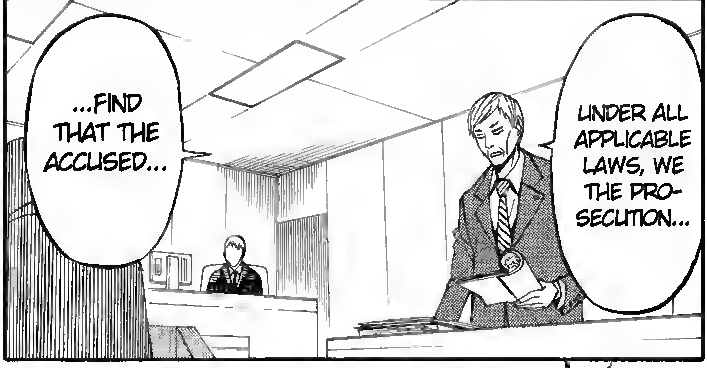
SUKEDACHI NINE
助太刀09

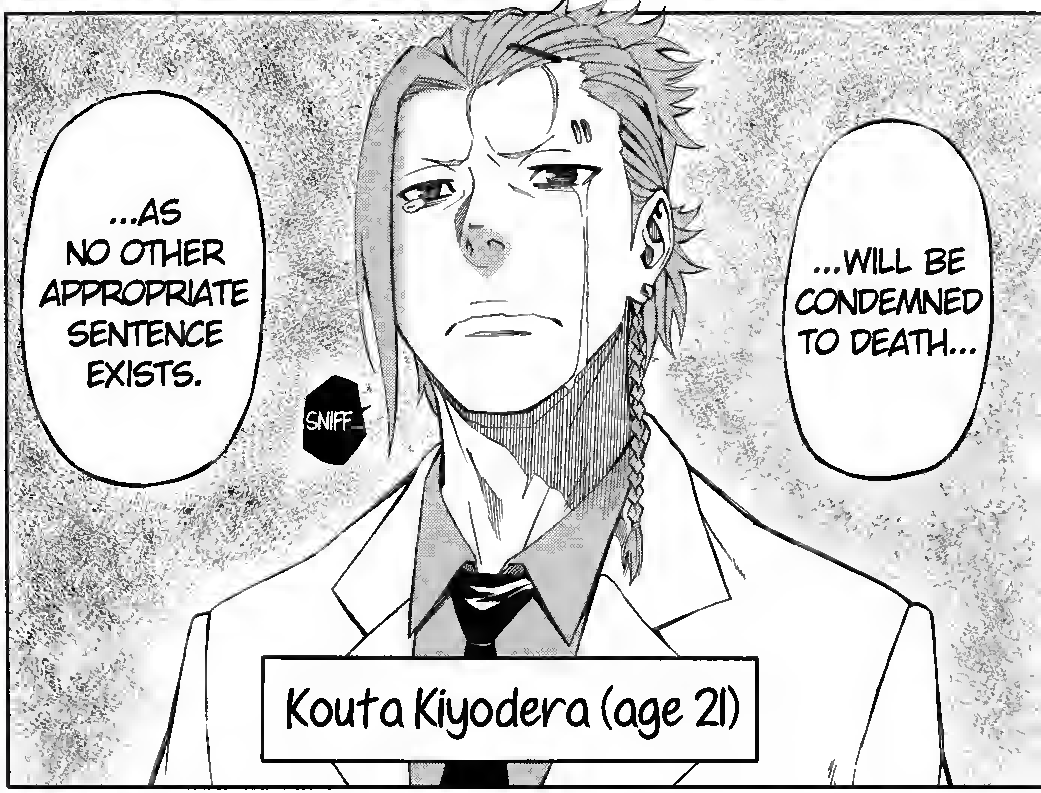
IT'S BEEN SEVEN YEARS SINCE THEN.
RYOKO KOIZUMI.
SHE'S THE ONE FROM THAT INCIDENT...
MITSUISHI
8
DING
SHE'S ONE OF THE FEW WHO MANAGED TO CLEAR ALL HURDLES LAID OUT BEFORE HER.
SHE MAY HAVE A FEW QUIRKS IN HER SKILL SET, BUT WE STILL CAN'T DENY IT.
I KNOW WE'VE BEEN ACTIVELY RECRUITING HER FOR THIS GIG, BUT...
...I'D LIKE TO THINK THIS IS FATE.
IF WE CAN GET HER A GOOD MENTOR, SHE'LL MAKE A GREAT ASSISTOR.
WELL, YOU'VE MADE THAT BUNCH WORK OUT ALL RIGHT.
POIK
I'M SURE SHE'LL BE FINE, TOO.
Tokyo Metropolitan Police
Assistant Superintendent
Kenji Okumura (Age 45)

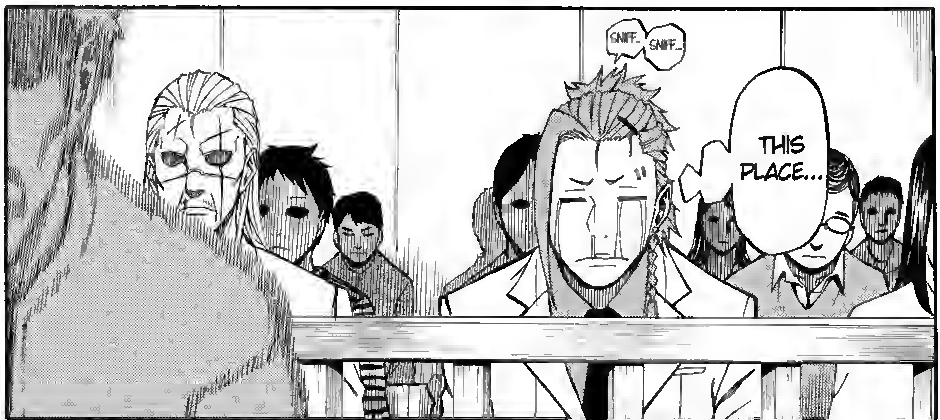
MIRROR:3 SIDE-B "KOUTA (1)"

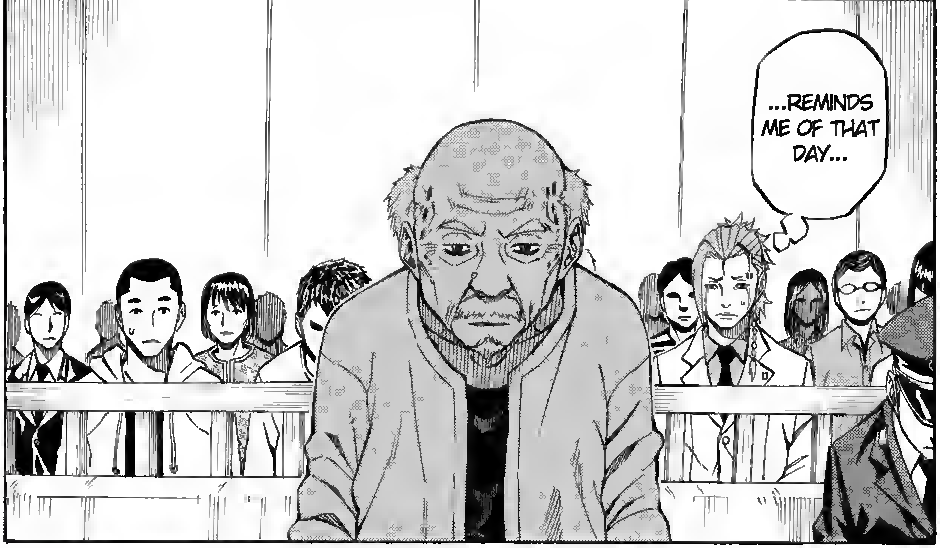
...YOU STABBED YOUR FATHER TO DEATH?
YOU'RE ONLY 11 YEARS OLD. IS IT TRUE THAT...
KOUTA KIYODERA-KUN.
家庭裁判
Family Court
...IF YOU CAN CALL HIM MY FATHER...
Kouta Kiyodera (age 11)
...YEAH, I KILLED HIM...

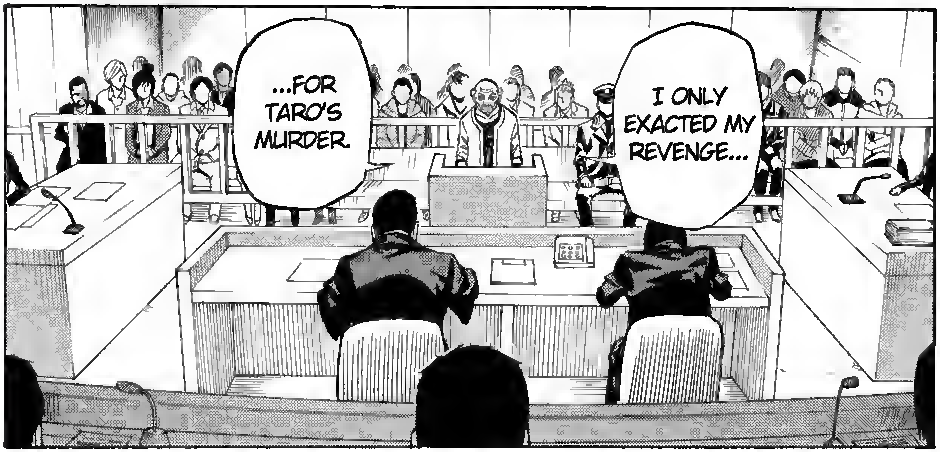

...FIND THAT THE ACCUSED...
UNDER ALL APPLICABLE LAWS, WE THE PROSECUTION...

裁判所
Courthouse


...AS NO OTHER APPROPRIATE SENTENCE EXISTS.
SNIFF...
...WILL BE CONDEMNED TO DEATH...
Kouta Kiyodera (age 21)


SNIFF... SNIFF...
THIS PLACE...


...REMINDS ME OF THAT DAY...


...FOR TARO'S MURDER.
I ONLY EXACTED MY REVENGE...

...TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT THIS TRIAL.
IT'S FINE WITH ME IF YOU WANT TO TREAT IT THAT WAY.
WHISPER
HOW-EVER.
IS THIS PART OF THE ASSISTORS' ENTRANCE EXAM TOO?
WHISPER
CAPTAIN... IT'S KINDA SUDDEN, PUTTING ME IN A COURTHOUSE GALLERY SEAT FOR MY JOB INTERVIEW.
WHISPER

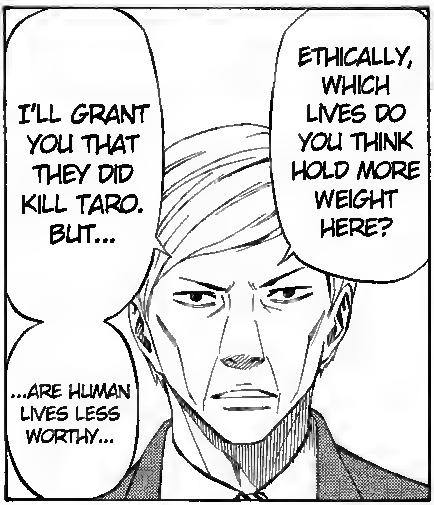
HOT DAMN, SHE'S A CUTE ONE!!
RIGHT? ♪
HOLY CRAP, DUDE... I THINK I'M ABOUT TO PASS OUT.
YOU'RE INTO THE KINDA GIRL WHO'D UPLOAD SOMETHING LIKE THIS?! ♪
CAN I SERIOUSLY GET IN A MIXER WITH THIS CHICK?!
...NOBU?
DUDE, THAT'S A LAME PUNCH LINE TO--
WHA--?
THUDD
ドサッ
UURGH!

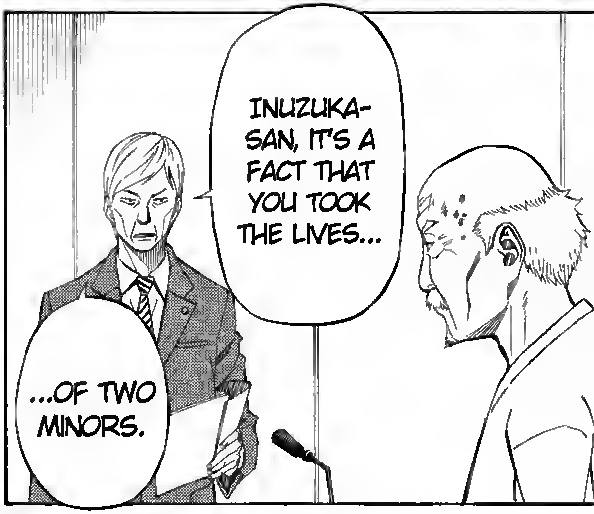
SCHLIP
THOKK
!?
SPLORCH
TWITCH
TWITCH
NOBU !!
!
FWUMP
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU, OLD MAN?!
WHA?!
WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT FOR?!

THIS IS REVENGE FOR TARO!!
YOU DON'T EVEN REMEMBER ...?
?.....
WHO... YOU ASK...?
WH...
...O ...?
.....
TA... R... O...
...FAMILY...!
GRIP
TARO... IS... MY...

AS A MINOR, YOU WERE PROTECTED UNDER PENAL CODE ARTICLE 41...
AND YOU BROUGHT ME HERE, KNOWING FULL WELL ABOUT MY PAST...?
Whisper
LOOKS LIKE YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW.
WITHOUT KNOWING... DON'T TRIALS HAPPEN TO DETERMINE IF THE PLAINTIFF'S GUILTY OR NOT?
Whisper
WE DON'T WANT YOU JOINING US WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT A REAL TRIAL IS LIKE.
Whisper
YOU HAD TO TAKE THE STAND JUST TO CONFIRM ONE OR TWO THINGS. IT WASN'T A REAL CROSS-EXAMINATION.
Whisper
WHETHER THE PROSECUTORS' STATEMENTS ARE 100% CORRECT OR NOT.
THIS COUNTRY'S TRIALS ARE RUN TO CONFIRM ONE THING ONLY--
...THE ACCUSED AND THEIR LAWYERS.
...VERSUS...
TRIALS AREN'T AN EVEN TUG-OF-WAR BETWEEN THE VICTIMS AND PROSECUTORS...

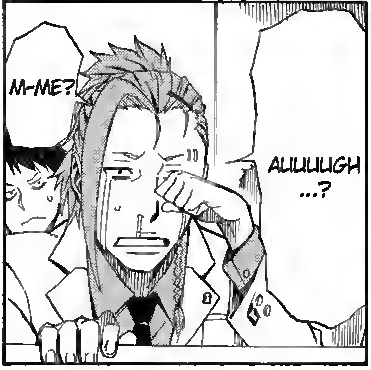
PROSECUTORS IN THIS COUNTRY ARE THE CLOSEST THING WE HAVE TO GODS.
Whisper
IN OTHER WORDS, GUILTY VERDICTS ARE 99.8% GUARANTEED.
Whisper
.....


I'LL GRANT YOU THAT THEY DID KILL TARO. BUT...
ETHICALLY, WHICH LIVES DO YOU THINK HOLD MORE WEIGHT HERE?
...ARE HUMAN LIVES LESS WORTHY...


INUZUKA-SAN, IT'S A FACT THAT YOU TOOK THE LIVES...
...OF TWO MINORS.

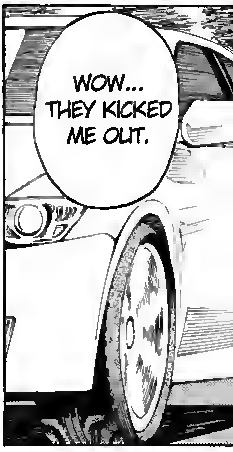
...THAN YOUR PET DOG'S?!

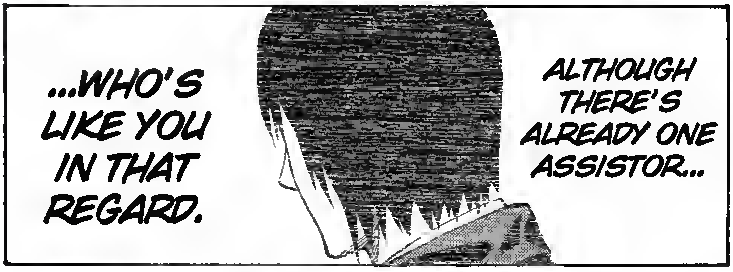
MUTTER
MUTTER
NNGH...
UUUGH... NOBUO ...!
.....
...I SAID I DID IT FOR REVENGE.
FOR A DOG?!
HE TOOK HIS REVENGE OUT ON HUMANS ?!
...IS A DOG?!
WHAT?! TARO...
THIS OLD GEEZER IS SCUM!!
HE MURDERED TWO KIDS JUST FOR THAT?!
RRRRRRRRRRRRGH...!!


M-ME?
ALILULIGH ...?

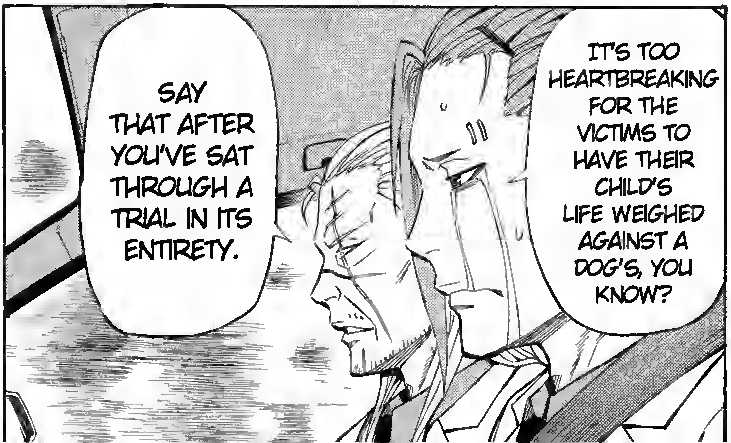
YOU THERE!
KEEP QUIET DURING THE PROCEEDINGS!
OTHERWISE EXCUSE YOURSELF RIGHT NOW!
AAAAULUGH!!

KOUTA, YOU TEND TO EMPATHIZE WITHOUT HESITATION...
...TOWARDS JUST ABOUT EVERYONE.
I'M SORRY FOR THE RUCKUS BACK THERE...
SNIFF
SNIFF


WOW... THEY KICKED ME OUT.


...WHO'S LIKE YOU IN THAT REGARD.
ALTHOUGH THERE'S ALREADY ONE ASSISTOR...

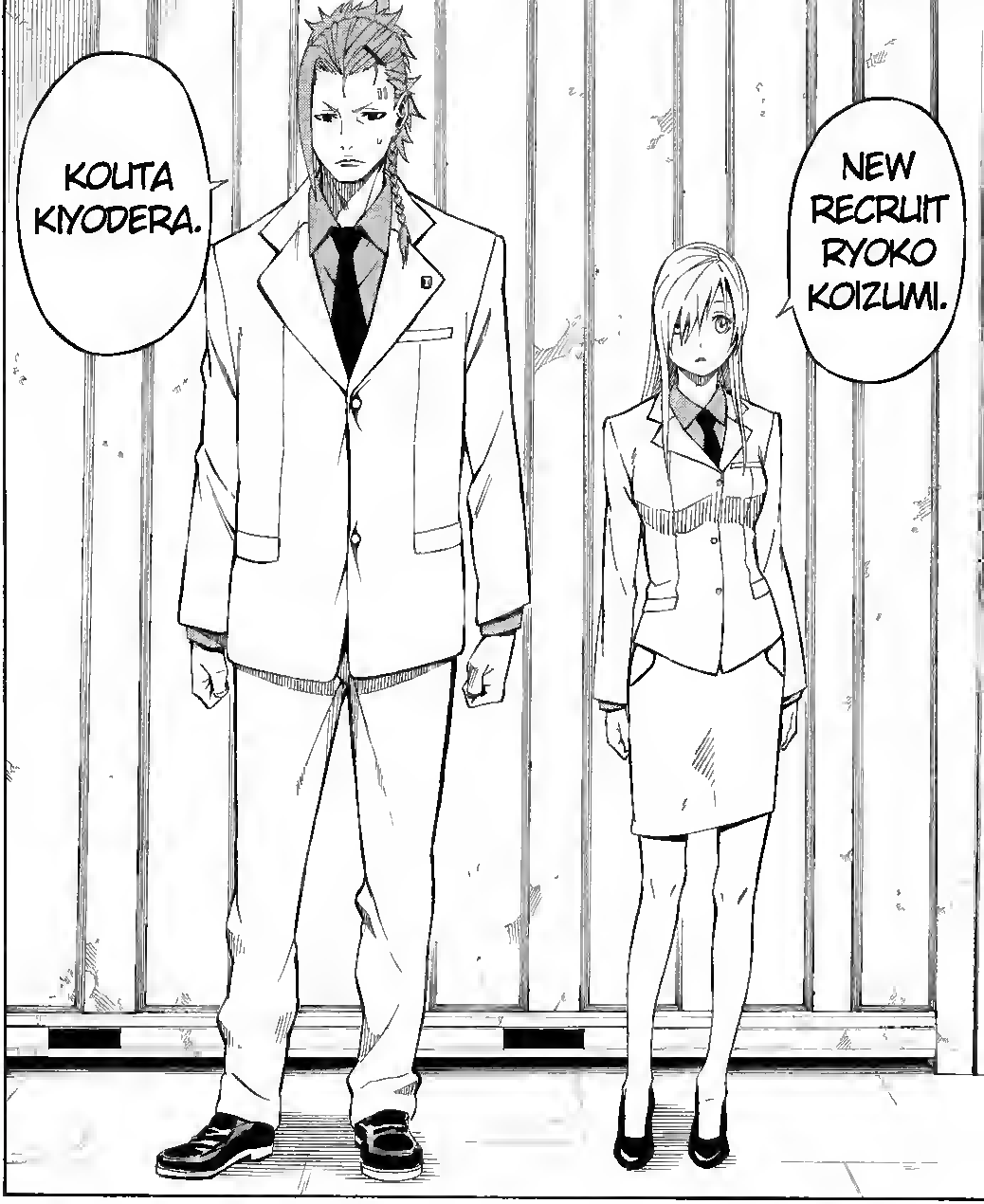
WHILE THAT EMPATHY IS A GREAT ASSET AS AN ASSISTOR...
...IT MAY WORK AGAINST YOU AT TIMES.

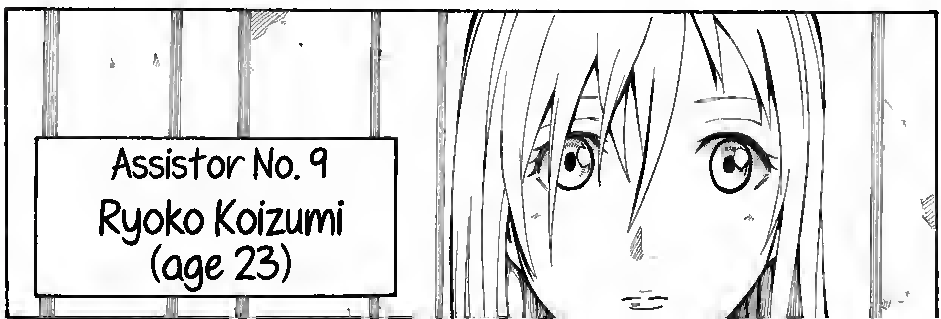

SAY THAT AFTER YOU'VE SAT THROUGH A TRIAL IN ITS ENTIRETY.
IT'S TOO HEARTBREAKING FOR THE VICTIMS TO HAVE THEIR CHILD'S LIFE WEIGHED AGAINST A DOG'S, YOU KNOW?

I WON'T SHED ANOTHER TEAR.
...NO, SIR.
WELL, THEN...
...YOU PASS.
WOULD YOU CRY SOME MORE IF YOU DID?
COULD IT BE, SIR...
...THAT I FAILED THIS EXAM?
ANOTHER NEW ASSIS-TOR?!
!
BY THE WAY, WE'LL BE PICKING UP ANOTHER NEW ASSISTOR ON THE WAY.
WHA?
GET IT TOGETH-ER.
DON'T LET ANYONE MAKE YOU CRY AGAIN, ALL RIGHT?

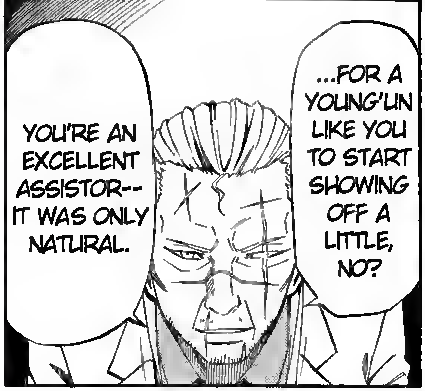
WHY AM I ASSIGNED TO BE THEIR COACH?!
CAP-TAIN ODA ?!
SNIFF SNIFF
MEOW
AND THERE'S TWO OF THEM, TOO!

IS THERE A PROBLEM, YUUJI?
ZZZ...
TWO NEW RECRUITS AT ONCE? THIS IS A RARITY.
THESE GUYS ARE GENUINE ASSIS-TORS...
THEY SURE LOOK LIKE A QUIRKY BUNCH...


KOUTA KIYODERA.
NEW RECRUIT RYOKO KOIZUMI.


Assistor No. 9
Ryoko Koizumi
(age 23)

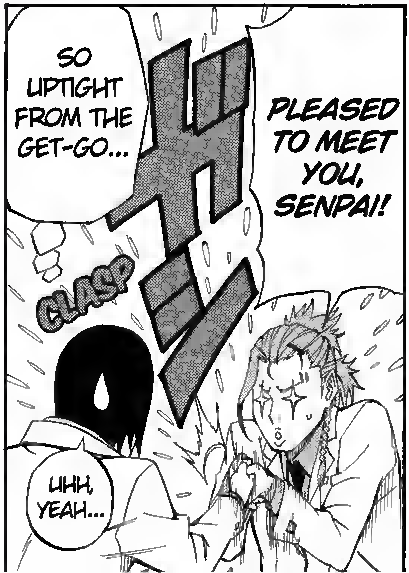
DID SHE REALLY QUALIFY TO BE AN ASSISTOR ?!
SHE LOOKS AWFULLY QUIET... AND DELI-CATE TO BOOT.
SHE'S A NEW RECRUIT LIKE ME...
GLANCE
.....
UGH. MEN.
DON'T GET CLOSE TO ME, AND DON'T STARE AT ME SO MUCH...
HUH --?


...FOR A YOUNG'UN LIKE YOU TO START SHOWING OFF A LITTLE, NO?
YOU'RE AN EXCELLENT ASSISTOR-- IT WAS ONLY NATURAL.

IT'S ABOUT TIME...
ARE YOU SURE I'D MAKE A GOOD COACH?
THERE MUST BE OTHERS --

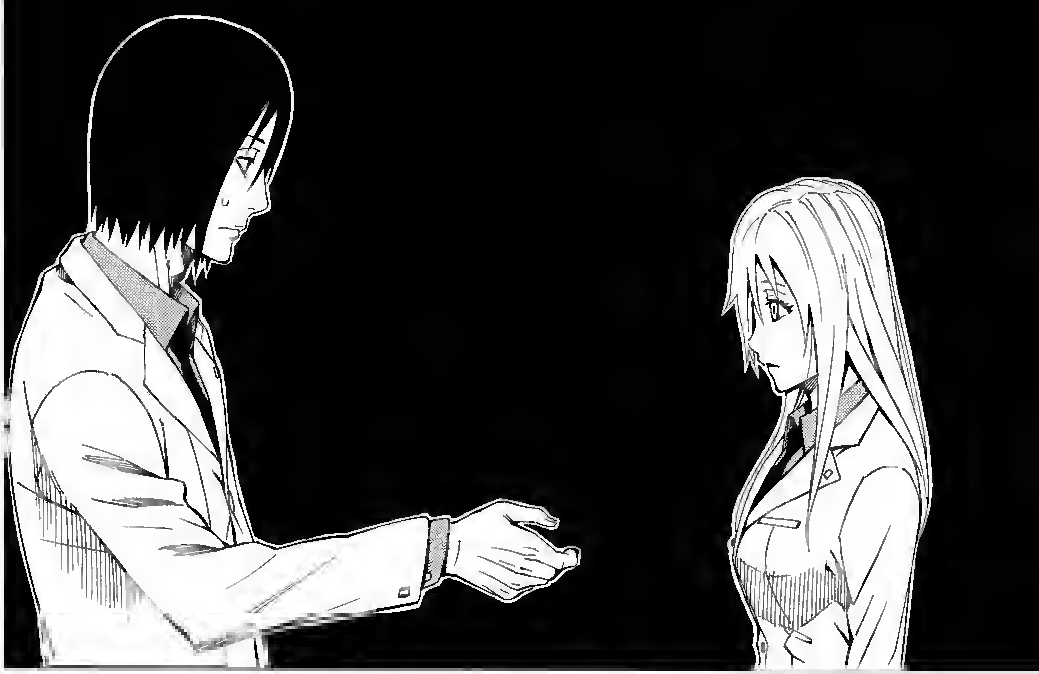
...I NEVER GOT THE MEMO, SIR.

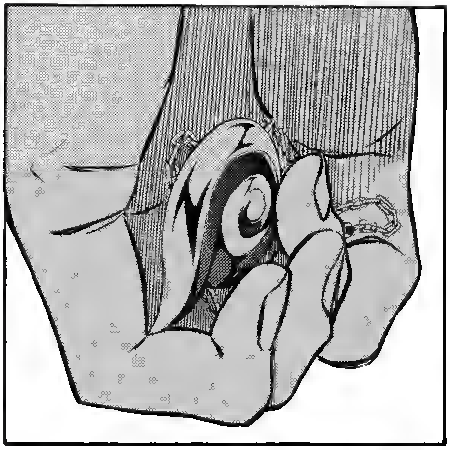
I WON'T FALL BEHIND!
IN ANY CASE, WE'RE BOTH NEW RECRUITS!

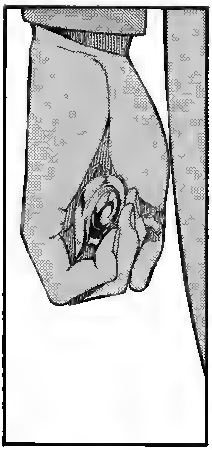

SO UPTIGHT FROM THE GET-GO...
PLEASED TO MEET YOU, SENPAI!
GLASP
UHH, YEAH...

TRAIN ME HARD AND THOR-OUGH, SIRS!
FIRST IM-PRESSIONS MAKE OR BREAK EVERY-THING!!

HUHN?
!
!
ERR?
UH...
NICE TO MEET YOU.
SWOOP
...SEEN THIS GIRL BEFORE ...?
WHERE HAVE I...
THE PLEASURE IS MINE, SIR.
ANY-WAY, A PLEAS-URE.
WHAT? OH NO, I MUST BE MIS-TAKEN.
HARASSING ME FROM THE GET-GO, SIR?
IT'S... OUR FIRST TIME, RIGHT?
?





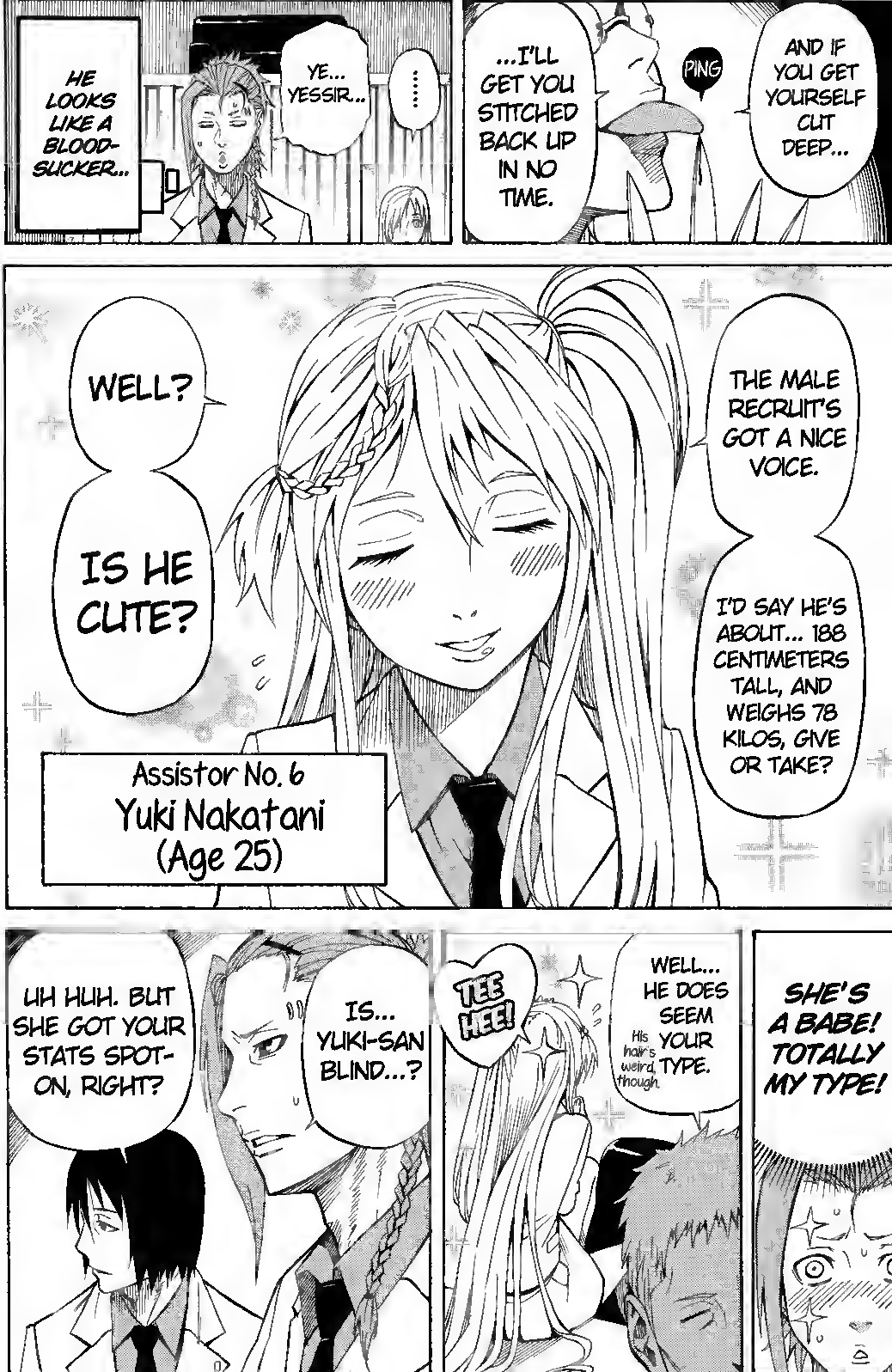


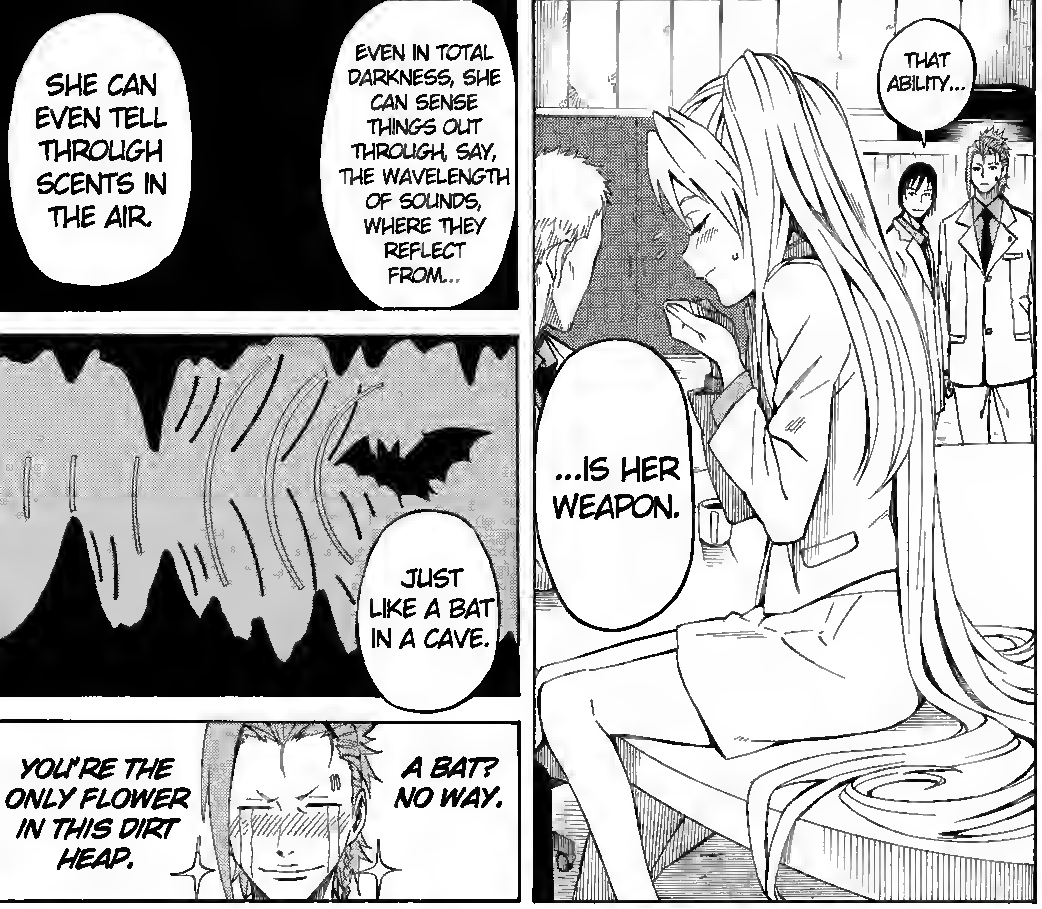
CLENCH

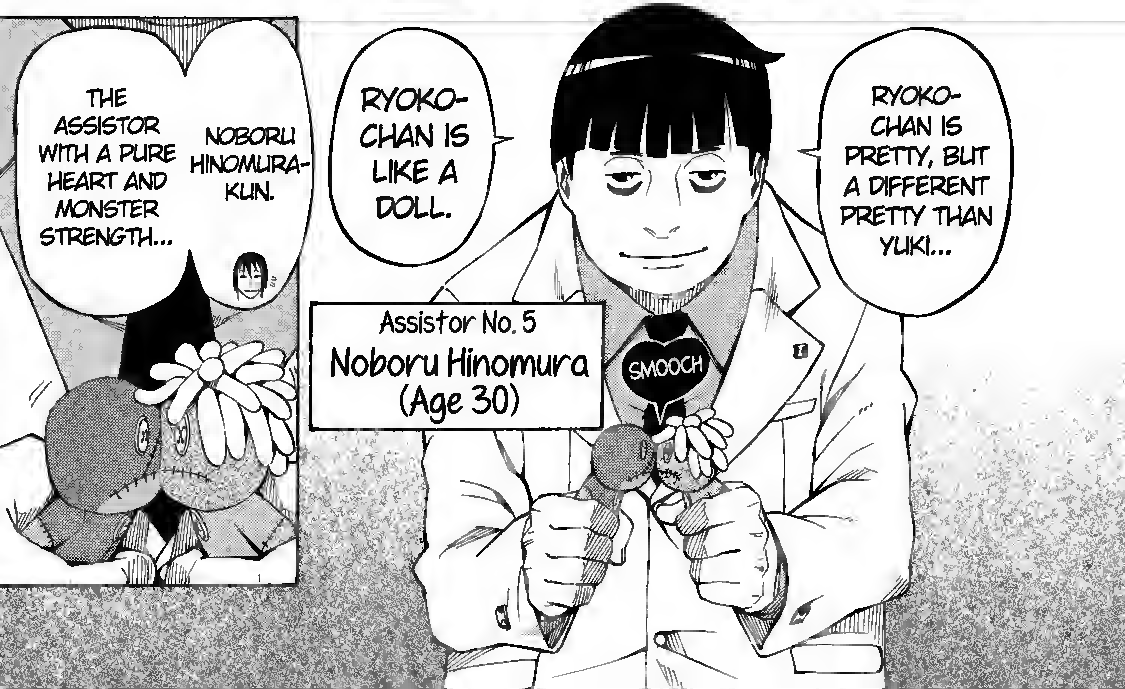
OH CRAP... SHE'S THE KINDA GIRL I CAN'T HANDLE...
...SHE MIGHT MAKE ME CRY AFTER ALL...

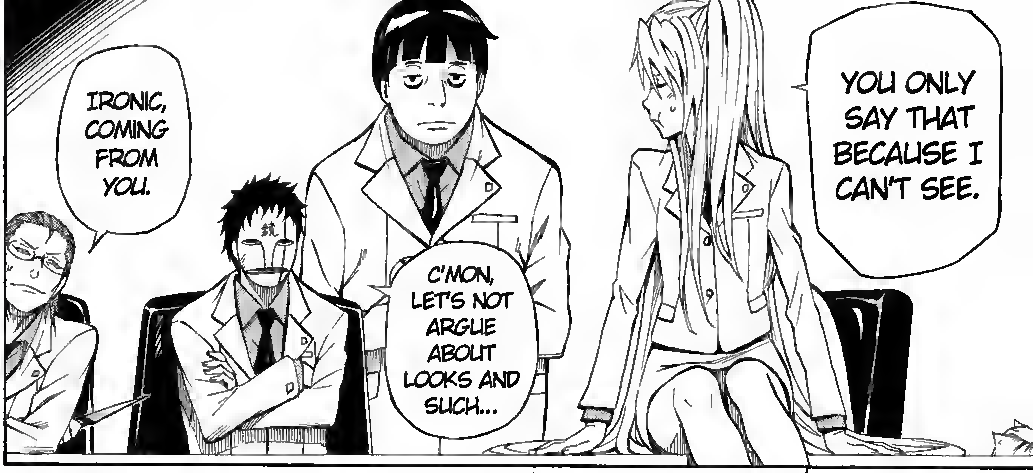
AH... SURE.
.....
SHIT

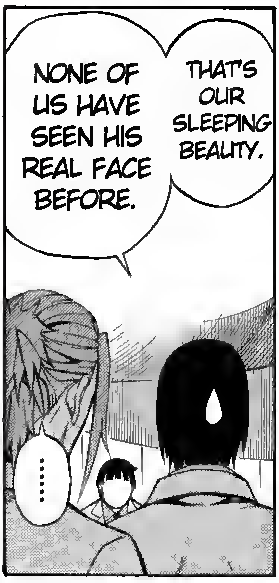
SINCE THE AIRLINE COMPANY THAT OWNED THIS HANGAR WENT UNDER, WE APPROPRIATED IT FOR OURSELVES.
AS YOU CAN SEE, THIS IS THE ASSISTORS' LAIR.
HEY NEW GUYS, NO NEED TO BE SO UPTIGHT AROUND US.
...THEN THAT MEANS THERE'S A WHOLE LOTTA NEW DEAD PEOPLE OUT THERE.
BESIDES, IF WE'RE ACTUALLY BUSY...
HEY, WHY BOTHER TO GLOSS IT OVER?
FACTS ARE FACTS.
CLINK CLINK
DEATH
CONSIDER IT OUR OWN LITTLE COFFEE SHOP BETWEEN JOBS, EH?
PRESS
GLU-GLUB
DON'T MAKE US LOOK BAD IN FRONT OF THE NEWBIES!
IF THE RETALIATION INVOLVES STABBING AND SHARP OBJECTS...
...THEN I'M USUALLY WHO THEY TURN TO.
SLURP
FORMER MD YOSHIHIKO HAGIWARA, FOLKS.
SWIP
Special Task Force
Assistor No. 3
Yoshihiko Hagiwara
(Age 36)

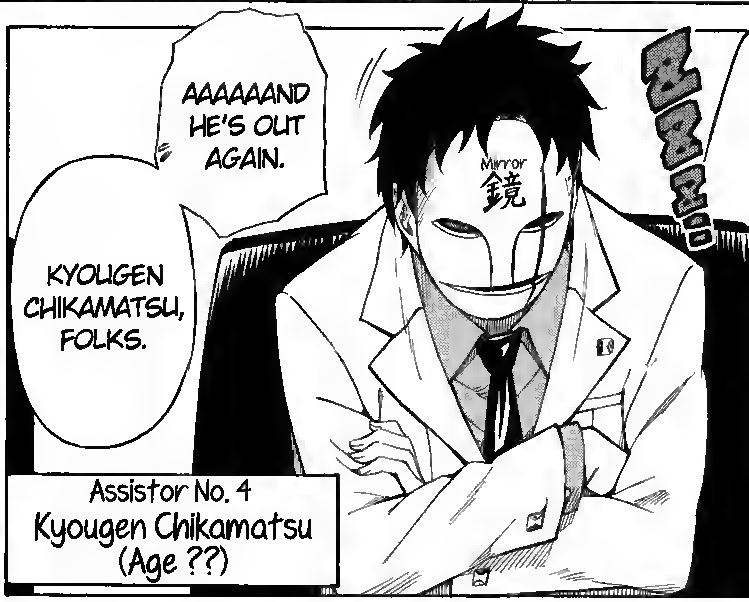

HE LOOKS LIKE A BLOOD-SUCKER...
YE... YESSIR...
.....
...I'LL GET YOU STITCHED BACK UP IN NO TIME.
PING
AND IF YOU GET YOURSELF CUT DEEP...
WELL?
IS HE CUTE?
THE MALE RECRUIT'S GOT A NICE VOICE.
I'D SAY HE'S ABOUT... 188 CENTIMETERS TALL, AND WEIGHS 78 KILOS, GIVE OR TAKE?
Assistor No. 6
Yuki Nakatani
(Age 25)
UH HUH. BUT SHE GOT YOUR STATS SPOT-ON, RIGHT?
IS... YUKI-SAN BLIND...?
TEE HEE!
WELL... HE DOES SEEM YOUR TYPE.
His hair's weird, though.
SHE'S A BABE! TOTALLY MY TYPE!

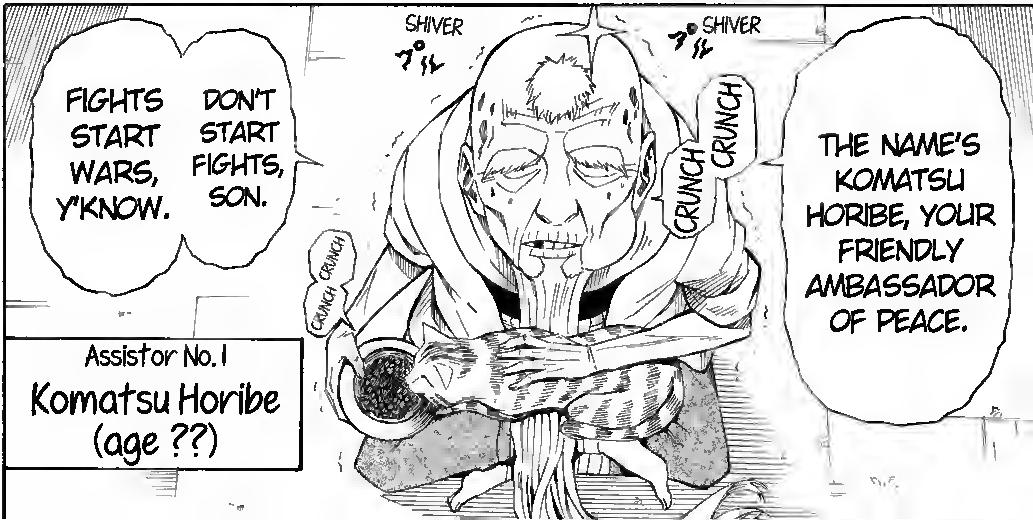

THAT ABILITY...
...IS HER WEAPON.
EVEN IN TOTAL DARKNESS, SHE CAN SENSE THINGS OUT THROUGH, SAY, THE WAVELENGTH OF SOUNDS, WHERE THEY REFLECT FROM...
SHE CAN EVEN TELL THROUGH SCENTS IN THE AIR.
JUST LIKE A BAT IN A CAVE.
A BAT? NO WAY.
YOU'RE THE ONLY FLOWER IN THIS DIRT HEAP.


RYOKO-CHAN IS LIKE A DOLL.
RYOKO-CHAN IS PRETTY, BUT A DIFFERENT PRETTY THAN YUKI...
THE ASSISTOR WITH A PURE HEART AND MONSTER STRENGTH...
NOBORU HINOMURA-KUN.
SMOOCH
Assistor No. 5
Noboru Hinomura
(Age 30)


IRONIC, COMING FROM YOU.
C'MON, LET'S NOT ARGUE ABOUT LOOKS AND SUCH...
YOU ONLY SAY THAT BECAUSE I CAN'T SEE.


NONE OF US HAVE SEEN HIS REAL FACE BEFORE.
THAT'S OUR SLEEPING BEAUTY.
.....


AAAAAAND HE'S OUT AGAIN.
KYOUGEN CHIKAMATSU, FOLKS.
Mirror
鏡
KIKEN
Assistor No. 4
Kyougen Chikamatsu
(Age ??)


FIGHTS START WARS, Y'KNOW.
DON'T START FIGHTS, SON.
SHIVER
SHIVER
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
THE NAME'S KOMATSU HORIBE, YOUR FRIENDLY AMBASSADOR OF PEACE.
Assistor No. 1
Komatsu Horibe
(age ??)

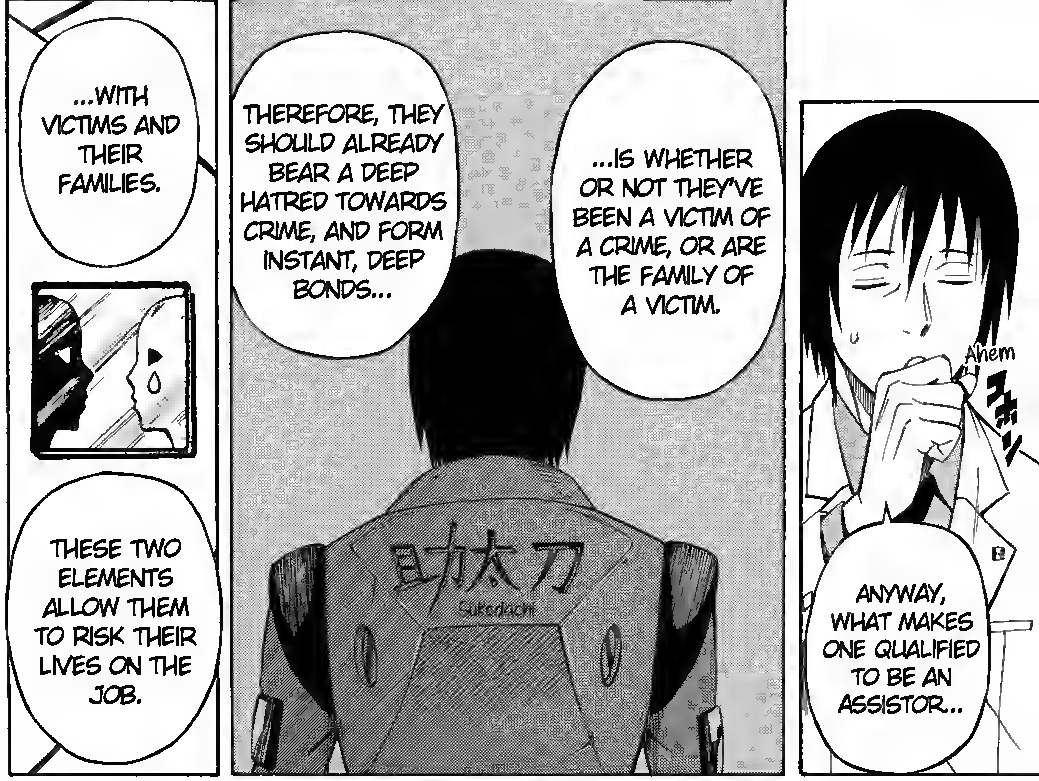
IT WAS ALL A TERRIBLE MESS, YES IT WAS...
I SAW THINGS DURING THE WAR, SON...
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
THASSA GOOD KITTY...
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
MEW...
WHEN DID HE?!
BWA-?!
SHIVER
SHIVER
I NEVER NOTICED...
!!
HE'S EATING CAT FOOD?!
HUNGER'S THE GREATEST ENEMY, AND ALL THAT.
IT'S GOOD STUFF.
HERE. WANT SOME?
TREMBLE TREMBLE
SCATTER
SCATTER
THIS RECRUIT IS SYMPATHIZING WITH THE OLD MAN?!
HIS YOUTH MUST'VE BEEN ROUGH!
YES-SIR!
GLADLY PARTAKE, SIR!
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
Eat up, son!
.....
...THEN HE'S LIVED WELL OVER A CENTURY..!
IF HE'S A FORMER IMPERIAL SOLDIER, THEN...

THE NAME'S SAKURADA.
A pleasure.
Assistor No. 2
Kazunari Sakurada
(Age 44)
WE ASSISTORS ARE ALL A COLLECTION OF QUIRKS, ALL RIGHT.
I'M THIRD IN SENIORITY HERE, AFTER CAPTAIN ODA AND OLD MAN KOMATSU.

YUUJI YAMAGISHI.
AND THAT GUY'S YOUR NEW GUARDIAN— OUR OWN RISING STAR...
Yeah, keep saying that.
Assistor No. 7
Yuuji Yamagishi
(Age 24)

OH GOOD, THERE'S AT LEAST ONE NORMAL-LOOKING DUDE HERE...
PHEW

I HEARD THAT FROM CAPTAIN ODA.
...AND HE'S ALWAYS COMPARING THIS TO THAT.
A MOUSEY, WORRY-WART-KIND OF GUY...
PERSON-ALITY-WISE, HE'S...
TAP
UGH
HEH HEH... BINGO.
FOR ALL THAT, THOUGH, HE CAN BE DAFT ENOUGH TO LOSE SIGHT OF HIS MOTHER'S PRECIOUS MEMENTO.
SO MUCH FOR BEING THEIR SENIOR...
AND ALREADY, THERE GOES MY DIGNITY...
YES-SIR.
...YOU BETTER WORK HIM HARD.
IF YOU DON'T WANNA CATCH THE BUG FROM HIM...


...WITH VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES.
THESE TWO ELEMENTS ALLOW THEM TO RISK THEIR LIVES ON THE JOB.
THEREFORE, THEY SHOULD ALREADY BEAR A DEEP HATRED TOWARDS CRIME, AND FORM INSTANT, DEEP BONDS...
...IS WHETHER OR NOT THEY'VE BEEN A VICTIM OF A CRIME, OR ARE THE FAMILY OF A VICTIM.
Ahem
ANYWAY, WHAT MAKES ONE QUALIFIED TO BE AN ASSISTOR...

...BE KNOWN TO ALL OF US HERE.
DO REALIZE, THOUGH, THAT THOSE SECRETS WILL EVENTUALLY...
AS FAR AS YOUR PAST EXPERIENCES ARE CONCERNED, THOUGH...
I'M SURE YOU'D LIKE TO KEEP IT ALL A SECRET.
...WE WON'T ASK, AND WE WON'T PRY.

I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE SHE'D SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT...
SHE'S GREEN LIKE ME, AND ALREADY SHE'S VOLUNTEERED TO CARRY OUT AN EXECUTION?
I'M NOT SURE I CAN GET ALONG WITH HER...
YOU WON'T LAST LONG HERE IF YOU SULK LIKE THAT.
THIS RETALIATION AGAINST THE SERIAL RAPIST AND MURDERER...
ALLOW ME THE HONOR!
...IT FEELS LIKE I'VE ALREADY BEEN LEFT BEHIND.
KOUTA... WAS IT?
DO YOU...
SITトソ
THIS KID'S GETTIN' ON MY NERVES!!
ACTUALLY, I THINK I CAN GET ALONG WITH YOU, YUUJI-SENPAI!
OH, WELL...
ERK ...!
BUT...

...REALLY WANT...
...TO KILL SOMEONE SO SOON?
NO! I JUST WANT TO START WORK-ING...
...FOR THE SAKE OF VICTIMS EVERY-WHERE!
YOU'RE LIKE ME, KOLITA.
WE TAKE TO EMPATHIZING WITH VICTIMS WAY TOO DEEPLY.
SO, LISTEN... RETALIATIONS ARE--
THIS WON'T BE MY FIRST TIME I'VE RETALIATED AGAINST SOMEONE.

I SEE.
THEN YOU DIDN'T NEED ME TO LECTURE YOU.
N-NO! I DIDN'T MEAN IT THAT WAY!
...IT'S JUST...
...I INTEND TO FULLY UNDERSTAND WHAT IT MEANS TO EMPATHIZE WITH SOMEONE.
EVER SINCE I COULD REMEMBER, IT WAS JUST ME AND MY STUBBORN OLD GRANDPA LIVING UNDER ONE ROOF.
WITHOUT A WOMAN'S TOUCH AROUND THE PLACE, I ENDED UP GROWING INTO A LITTLE PUNK.
Healthy Shoulder Massage
I BELIEVED THAT NOTHING MATTERED AS LONG AS IT WORKED OUT FOR ME.

DID YA HAVE YERSELF ANOTHER BAD DREAM?
WATER GHOST?
YOU SURE IT ISN'T BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T CLEAN THE TUB UP AFTER YERSELF?
W-WATER GHOST...
SNIFF
C'MERE.
PAT PAT

HMPH.
COMPARED TO WHEN YOUR GRANDMA WAS ALIVE...
...GHOSTS AIN'T NOTHING TO FEAR.
YOU'RE THE ONE AFRAID OF GHOSTS, GRAMPA.
THAT'S WHY YOU LET ME SLEEP WITH YOU.
...WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE, I'D CRAWL INTO BED WITH MY PARENTS ALL THE TIME.
SO I KNOW ALL TOO WELL HOW YOU FEEL, KID.
!
...
STILL...
...
I EMPATHIZE WITH YOU.
EMPUH... THIGHS?

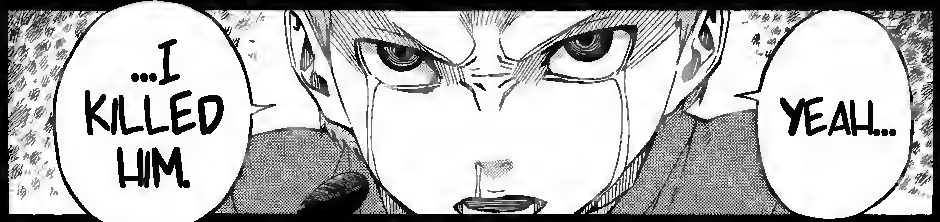
SQUEEZE
WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT HOW SOMEONE ELSE FEELS, AND THEN YOU FEEL EXACTLY HOW THEY FEEL.

PLEASE, GRAMPA?
DON'T GO ANY-WHERE...
GRAMPA ...?
YEAH?
SNIFFLE
NO...
YOU'RE CRYING, GRAMPA! I TOLD YOU YOU'RE SCARED OF GHOSTS!!
I'M JUST... SO TOUCHED...

I THOUGHT I WOULD SPEND MY DAYS LIKE THIS FOREVER WITH GRANDPA...
...AS IF IT WERE THE MOST NATURAL THING.
BUT...
...WHEN I WAS ELEVEN ...
...GRANDPA WAS STABBED TO DEATH BY A MAN.
...MY FATHER WHO RAN OUT ON MY MOTHER YEARS AGO.
I DIDN'T KNOW A THING.
NOT ABOUT MY PARENTS, NOR ABOUT THE FACT THAT ANY MONEY GRANDPA COULD'VE USED TOWARDS HIS MEDICAL BILLS WENT TOWARDS RAISING ME INSTEAD.
NOR ABOUT THE FACT THAT THIS MAN TRIED TO RE-SECURE PARENTAL RIGHTS...
AND THAT MAN TURNED OUT TO BE...

GRANDPA WAS THE ONE WHO TAUGHT ME WHAT EMPATHY WAS.
GRANDPA SHOULDERED THE RESPONSIBILITY OF RAISING ME ALL BY HIMSELF.
IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I RESONATED WITH SOME-ONE...
...SOMEONE OTHER THAN MYSELF...
...FROM DEEPER THAN MY OWN HEART.
THAT MAN CAME TO SEE ME SOON AFTER.
HE WAS IN TEARS.
IT'S DADDY, SON...
KOUTA... I FINALLY GET TO HUG YOU...
I LEAPED INTO HIS ARMS...
...WITH EVERYTHING I HAD...

...NO EMPATHY WAS BORN TOWARDS HIM.
NO MATTER HOW MANY TEARS WERE SHED BY THE MAN WHO CALLED HIMSELF MY FATHER...
...WITH A PENCIL IN MY HAND.


...I KILLED HIM.
YEAH...

...BY PAYING FOR MY CRIME, EH?
WHAT DO YOU GUYS MEAN...
家庭裁判
Family Court

IF HE DIDN'T CARE ABOUT GRANDPA, THEN I WANTED AT LEAST ONE THING OUT OF HIM...
...TO MAKE HIM UNDERSTAND WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE STABBED LIKE THAT!!
IF HE DIES BEHIND BARS OR FROM HANGING, THEN WHAT?!
YOU DO THAT, AND HE WON'T GET A CHANCE...
...TO EMPATHIZE WITH THE MAN HE JUST KILLED!!
THAT'S WHY...
...I STABBED THAT MAN!
CRUEL AND UNUSUAL PUNISHMENT IS FORBIDDEN UNTIL ARTICLE 36 OF THE CONSTITUTION. BUT IF THIS WEREN'T THE CASE...
...THEN WHAT THIS CHILD DID MAY HAVE MERELY BEEN A NATURAL PROGRESSION OF EVENTS.
家庭裁判
Family Court
J.TV
THAT'S WHAT IT MEANS TO PAY FOR YOUR CRIMES, RIGHT?!
EVEN A KID KNOWS WHAT THAT'S LIKE!!

IN EXACTING REVENGE FOR MY GRANDPA...
...I KILLED MY OWN FATHER.

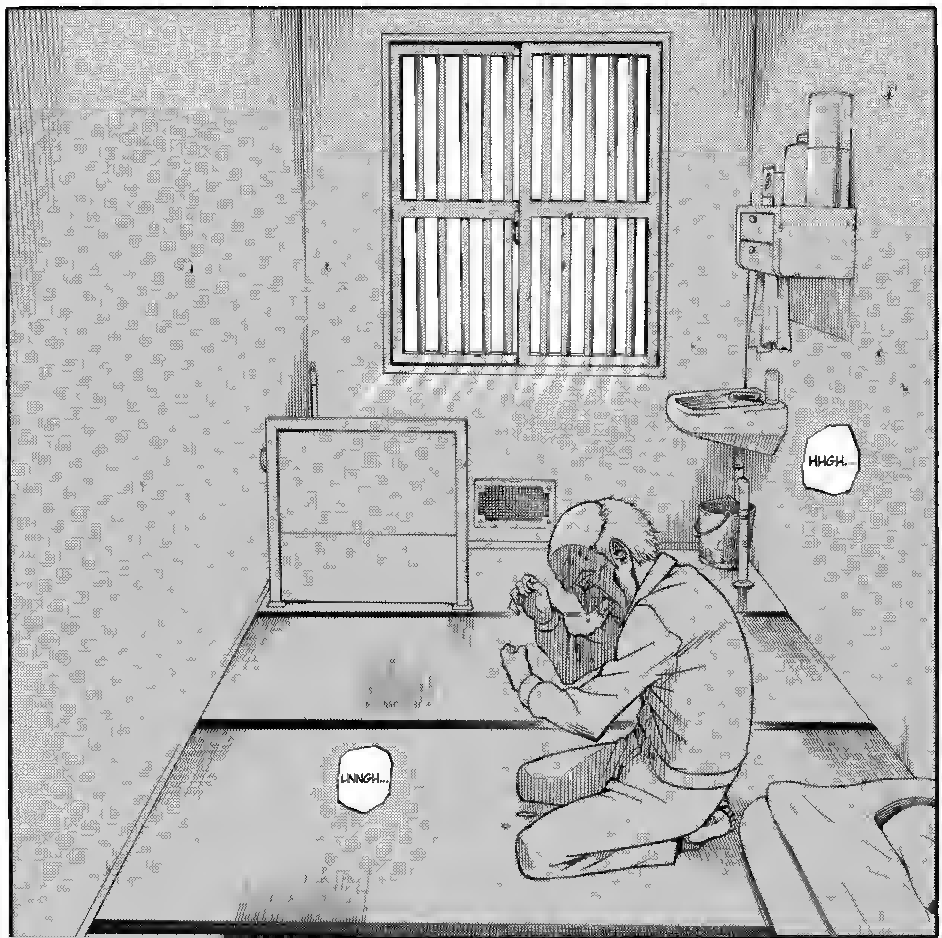
KOUTA... YOUR PAST AND RYOKO'S ARE ONE IN THE SAME.

THEY WERE BOTH THE CATALYSTS FOR ESTABLISHING THE DEATH BY RETALIATION ACT...

!
...WHILE THEY BEAR WOUNDS THAT ARE REOPENED THROUGH THE PROCEEDINGS.
YOU ALSO HATE COURTHOUSES FOR FORCING THE VICTIMS TO ATTEND THESE TRIALS...
I FIGURED ALL THAT OUT JUST FROM LISTENING TO YOU TALK.
UHH, NO?
WHOA!! ARE YOU, LIKE, PSYCHIC OR SOME-THING?!
A PARTICULAR TRIAL...?
...EVEN THOUGH HE KNEW ALL THAT STUFF ABOUT ME.
...THE CAPTAIN STILL MADE ME SIT THROUGH A PARTICULAR TRIAL...
DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING IN MIND FOR KOUTA?
CAPTAIN...
THAT'S WHY THERE'S NO WAY I CAN DO SOMETHING...
...LIKE EMPATHIZE WITH KILLERS.

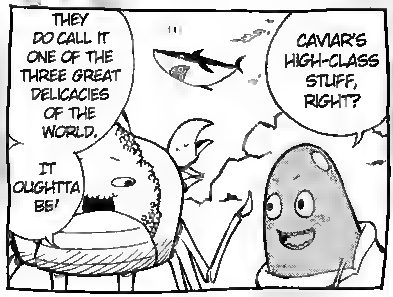
PLIP
PLIP
UNNGH.
HHGH...

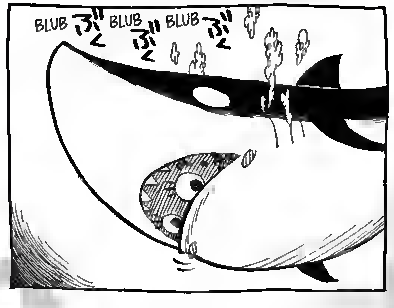
TARO...

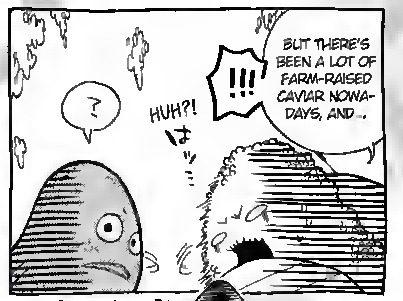

HHGH...
UNNGH...

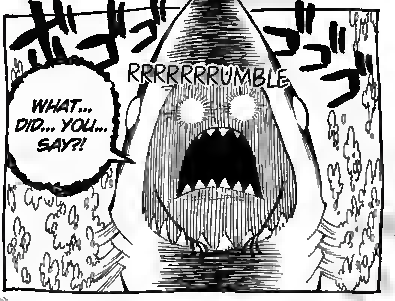
Retaliatory Execution Draft
DEATH BY RETALIATION
JIROU INUZUKA
THEY'RE EXECUTING HIM BY RETALIATION.
IT'S JUST AS I THOUGHT.
INSIDE THE CRAFT, FIRST CLASS SECTION: CURRENTLY THE CAPTAIN'S OFFICE
WE'LL NEED TO DECIDE ON OUR END TOO...
DEATH BY RETALIATION
SPECIAL EXECUTION ORDERS
Assistor No.9
Kouta Kiyodera
...WHO'LL COMMIT THE EXECUTION.
FWIPP

NOWADAYS... PT.1

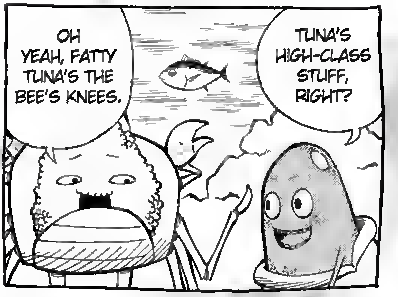


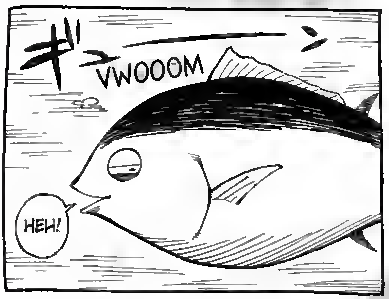


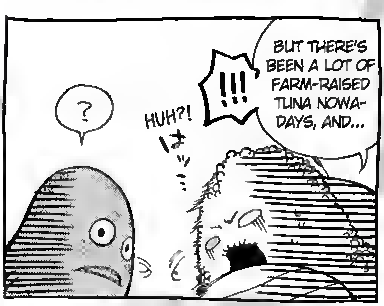


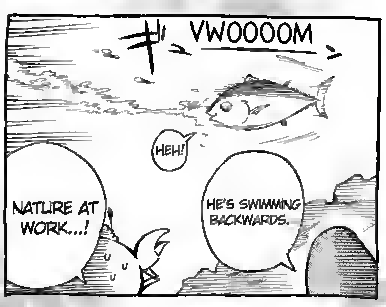


NOWADAYS... PT.2









English Digital Edition
Chapter 009

Sukedachi 09
助太刀09
Seishi Kishimoto

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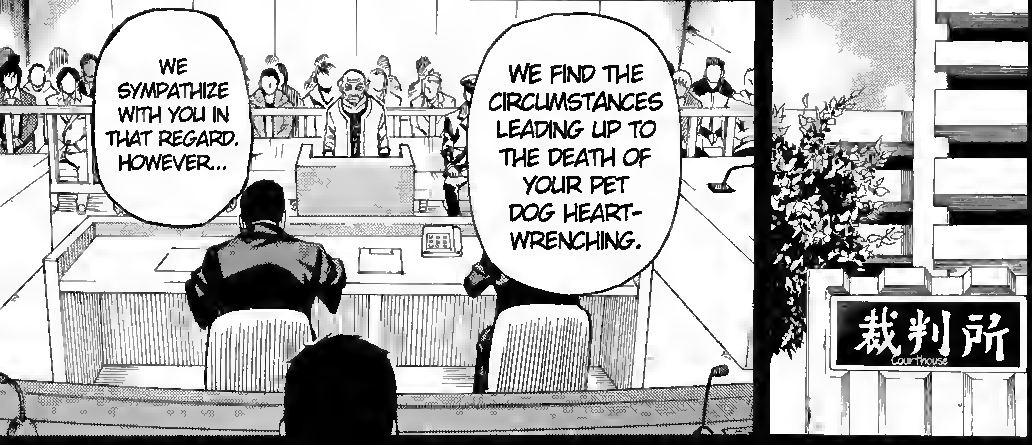
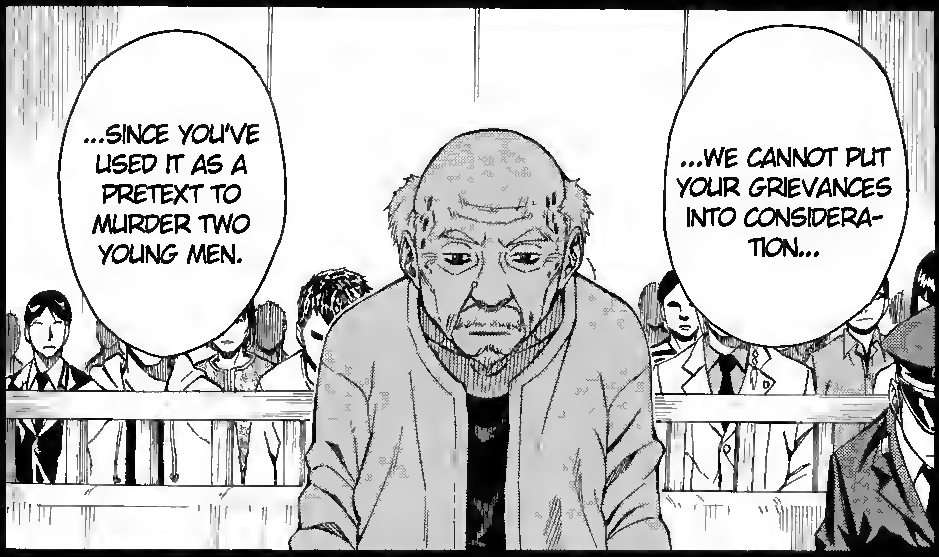
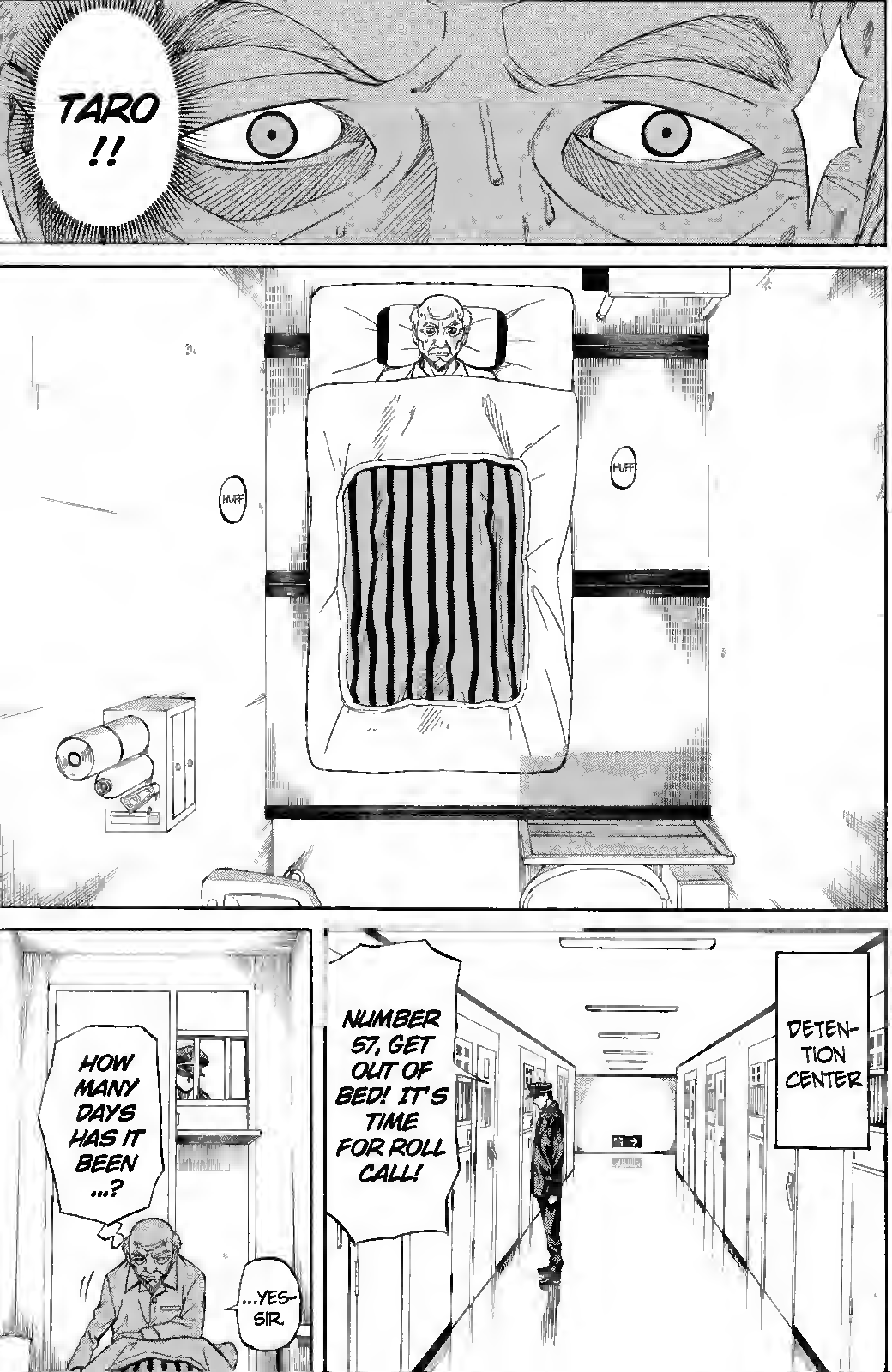
SUKEDACHI NINE
助太刀09


WE SYMPATHIZE WITH YOU IN THAT REGARD. HOWEVER...
WE FIND THE CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING UP TO THE DEATH OF YOUR PET DOG HEART-WRENCHING.
裁判所
Courthouse


...SINCE YOU'VE USED IT AS A PRETEXT TO MURDER TWO YOUNG MEN.
...WE CANNOT PUT YOUR GRIEVANCES INTO CONSIDERA-TION...

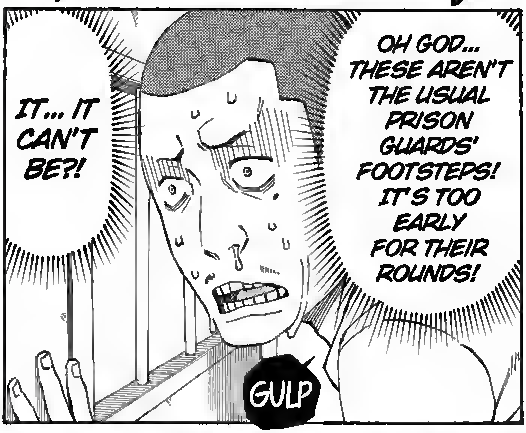
...TO HAVE YOU EXECUTED VIA RETALIATION!
THEREFORE... WE WILL GRANT THE VICTIM'S FAMILY THEIR REQUEST...

MIRROR:4
SIDE-B "KOUTA (2)"
助太刀
SUKEDACHI


TARO !!
HUFF
HUFF
DETEN-TION CENTER
NUMBER 57, GET OUT OF BED! IT'S TIME FOR ROLL CALL!
HOW MANY DAYS HAS IT BEEN ...?
...YES-SIR

ALWAYS GETTING YELLED AT BY THE GUARDS...
JEEZUS, THAT OLD GUY'S GOT SOME BAD LUCK.
CLAK
KNIGHT
NUMBER 57! REMEMBER THAT THE TAXPAYERS PAY FOR YOUR MEALS HERE!
IT'S AN INSULT TO THEM IF YOU DON'T EVEN TOUCH YOUR FOOD!
ACK
GULP
FOUR-HORSEMEN—
SCATTER

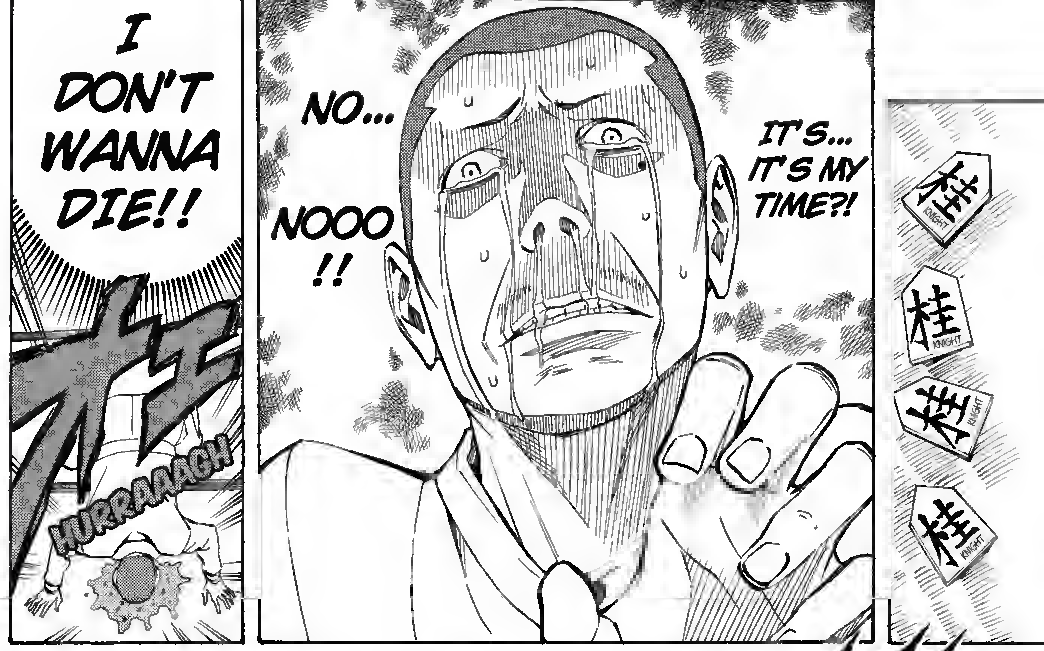
KLAK
CLOP
KLAK


IT... IT CAN'T BE?!
OH GOD... THESE AREN'T THE USUAL PRISON GUARDS' FOOTSTEPS! IT'S TOO EARLY FOR THEIR ROUNDS!
GULP

CLOP
KLAK
!!

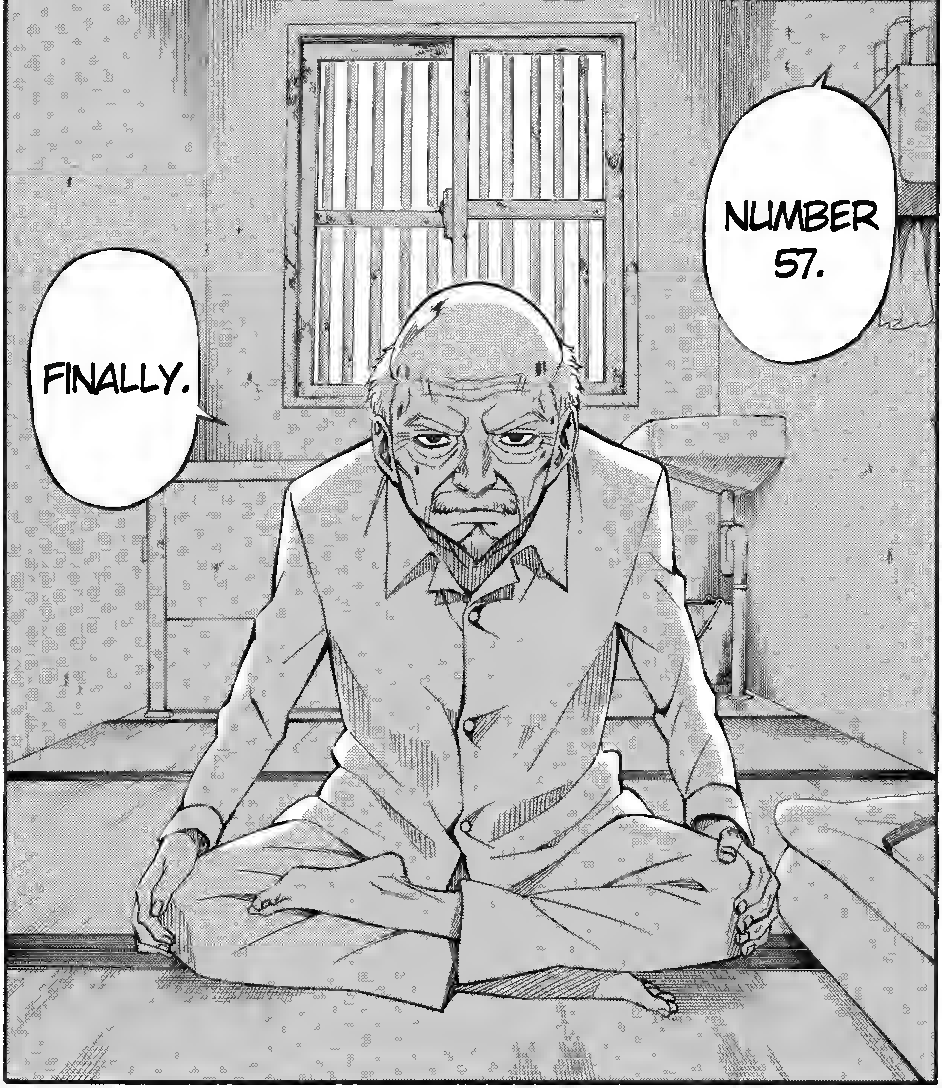
SOMEONE'S GONNA DIE TODAY!!
EEEYAAAGH!
FWUMP
TH-THEY'RE HERE TO PICK ONE OF US UP...

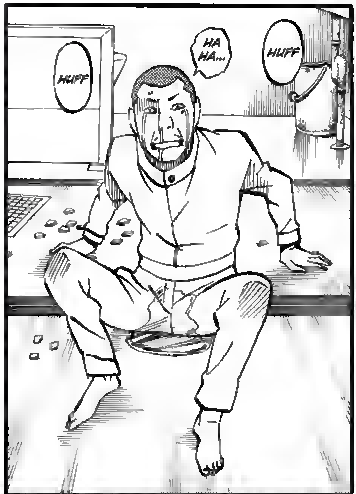
WHO'S GONNA DIE TODAY?!
WHO IS IT TODAY ...?!
I'LL GET TO LIVE FOR ANOTHER 48 HOURS!!
THEY DON'T EXECUTE ON THE WEEK-ENDS!
TOOM
TOOM
IT'S FRIDAY TODAY! PLEASE LEAVE ME BE!
PLEASE GOD! PLEASE!!
TOOM
TOOM
STAY AWAY!!
KLAK
KLAK
STAY AWAY!!
WHY'RE THEY STOPPING IN FRONT OF MY CELL?!
BA-BUM
TOPP
HURGH
HRGH
WHAT ?!


I DON'T WANNA DIE!!
HURRAAAGH!
NO...
NOOO !!
IT'S... IT'S MY TIME?!
桂 KNIGHT
桂 KNIGHT
桂 KNIGHT

SCREEEEE

COME OUTSIDE.


NUMBER 57.
FINALLY.


HUFF
HA HA...
HUFF

85
IT'S THAT GUY?!

WE ASSISTORS...
...WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND OUR SINCEREST CONDOLENCES...
...FOR THE UNFORTUNATE PASSING...
...OF NOBUO-KUN.

...SO HE KILLED THAT DOG IN SELF-DEFENSE... THAT'S ALL IT WAS.
AND YET...
THAT DOG SUDDENLY CAME AT HIM, BARKING UP A STORM...
I'LL GRANT YOU THAT THEY DID KILL TARO. BUT ARE HUMAN LIVES LESS WORTHY...
ETHICALLY, WHICH LIVES DO YOU THINK HOLD MORE WEIGHT HERE?
INUZUKA-SAN, IT'S A FACT THAT YOU TOOK THE LIVES OF TWO MINORS.
I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT MY OWN SON...
...THAN YOUR PET DOG'S?!
HNN-GH...!
...BY THAT CRUSTY OLD GEEZER!!
...WAS BRUTALLY STABBED...

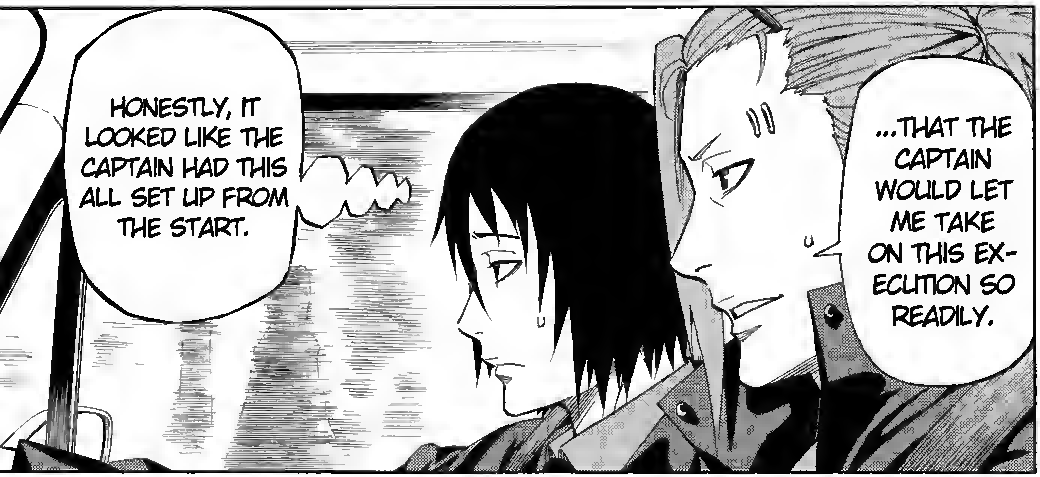
SNIFF...
SNIFF...
...PUT ME IN THE GALLERY SEATS FOR THAT OLD MAN'S TRIAL.
I SEE NOW WHY THE CAPTAIN...
NOBUO ...!
THAT I'D BE INVOLVED IN THIS...
HE KNEW THAT THIS WAS GONNA HAPPEN.
...WAS STABBED TO DEATH, JUST LIKE THIS VICTIM.
MY BELOVED GRANDPA...

NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS TO KILLERS...
...I CAN'T SHED ONE TEAR OF EMPATHY FOR THEM.
.....
WE WILL CHOOSE AMONG THE ASSISTORS ASSEMBLED HERE...
...THE ONE MOST SUITED TO CARRY OUT YOUR RETALIATION.
AS LONG AS THAT OLD GEEZER IS KILLED...
...I DON'T CARE WHO DOES IT!
...THAT HIS TEARS WON'T STOP.
HMMMMM...
ALTHOUGH WE DO HAVE ONE HERE WHO EMPATHIZED WITH YOUR PLIGHT SO MUCH...

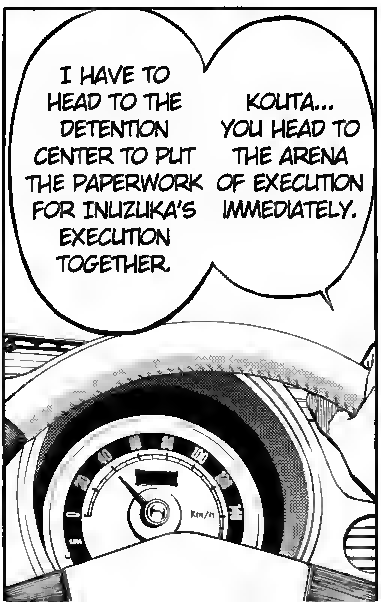
THEN LET ME...
ゴシ WIPE
ゴシ WIPE

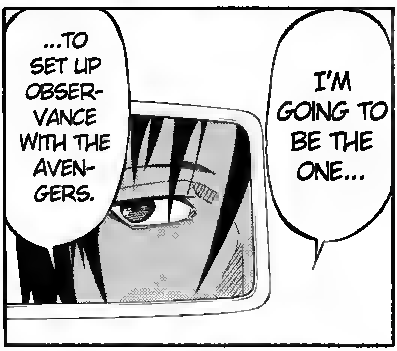
...BE THE ONE...
...TO CARRY OUT YOUR RETALIATION!
GRIN ニヤ

I STILL CAN'T BE-LIEVE...
VROOOM
PLINK
PLINK

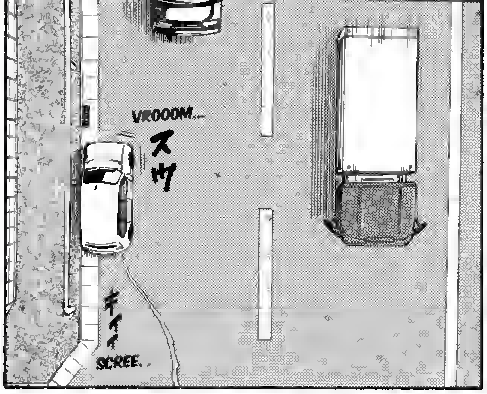

HONESTLY, IT LOOKED LIKE THE CAPTAIN HAD THIS ALL SET UP FROM THE START.
...THAT THE CAPTAIN WOULD LET ME TAKE ON THIS EX-ECUTION SO READILY.

UMM... DON'T YOU MEAN "HEAD TO THE PRISON"?


I HAVE TO HEAD TO THE DETENTION CENTER TO PUT THE PAPERWORK FOR INUZUKA'S EXECUTION TOGETHER.
KOUTA... YOU HEAD TO THE ARENA OF EXECUTION IMMEDIATELY.


...TO SET UP OBSER-VANCE WITH THE AVEN-GERS.
I'M GOING TO BE THE ONE...

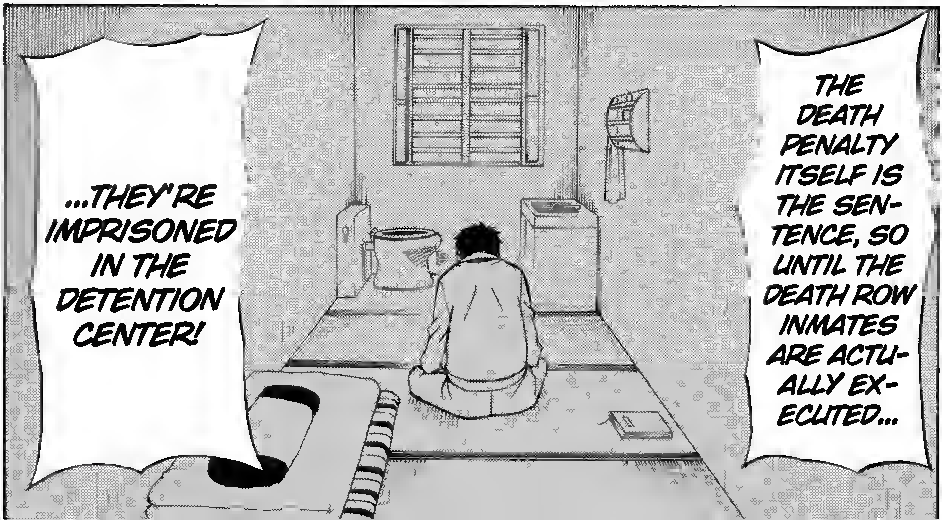
YEAH, SO?
IRK
YOU, SENPAI ?!


VROOOM...
SCREE..

YOU DON'T KNOW THE DIFFERENCE?! AND YOU STILL CALL YOURSELF AN ASSISTOR?!
GRRRR
!?

I MEAN, DETENTION CENTERS ARE FOR LOCKING UP CRIMINALS UNTIL THEY'RE JUDGED, RIGHT?
THE RULES THERE ARE MORE LAX THAN A PRISON'S, SO THERE WOULDN'T SEEM TO BE ANY REALLY DANGEROUS CRIMINALS THERE...

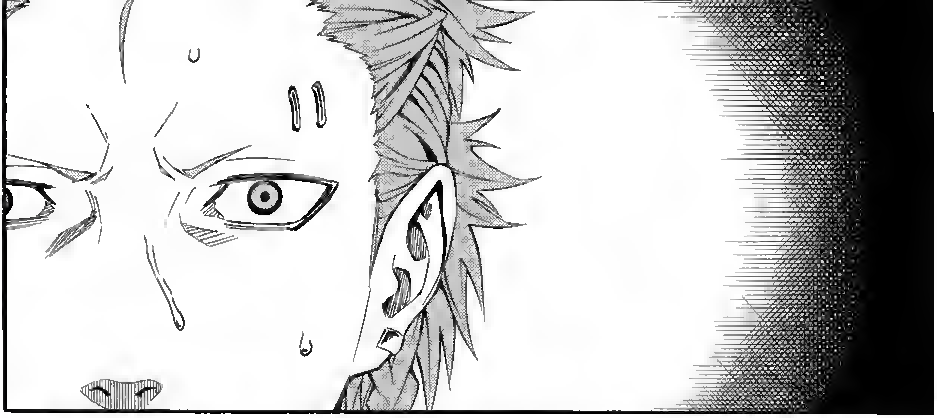
THERE IS WHERE THEY SERVE OUT THEIR SENTENCE!!
PRISON IS WHERE CRIMINALS GO ONCE THEIR SENTENCE IS DECIDED!

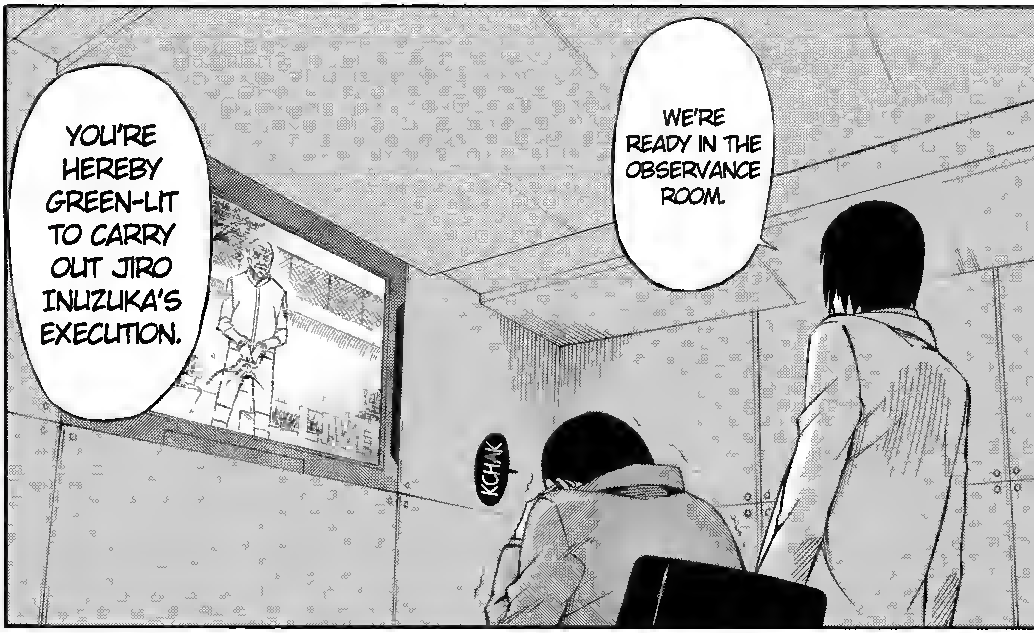

...THEY'RE IMPRISONED IN THE DETENTION CENTER!
THE DEATH PENALTY ITSELF IS THE SENTENCE, SO UNTIL THE DEATH ROW INMATES ARE ACTUALLY EXECUTED...

SERIOUSLY, KOUTA! YOU'RE ABOUT TO PULL OFF YOUR FIRST ASSIST SOON!
.....
WHEN I TOOK MY REVENGE OUT ON MY FATHER FOR KILLING GRANDPA...
...THEY PUT ME UNDER PROBATION IN A JUVENILE SUPPORT FACILITY.
...THEN IT'S ABOUT TIME...
...THAT YOU SHOWED ME YOU STOPPED BEING A BIG CRYBABY ABOUT EVERYTHING.

THIS IS AN ABANDONED 23-SQUARE KILOMETER CITY, COMPLETELY ENCLOSED BY WALLS BETWEEN HIGH-RISE BUILDINGS.
THIS IS THE ARENA OF EXECUTION... THERE IS NOWHERE TO ESCAPE!

DEATH ROW INMATE JIRO INUZUKA. YOUR EXECUTION BEARS THE SAME STANDING AS A DUEL...
TAKE OFF YOUR BLINDFOLD AND UNSHACKLE YOURSELF.
JINGLE
HMPH.



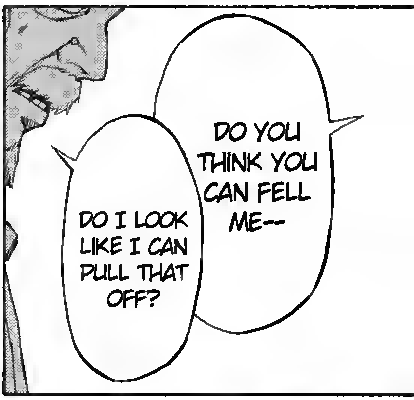

WE'RE READY IN THE OBSERVANCE ROOM.
YOU'RE HEREBY GREEN-LIT TO CARRY OUT JIRO INUZUKA'S EXECUTION.
KCHAK

IT'S HIM! MY SON'S MURDERER!!
SLAM
HURRY UP AND KILL HIM!!

BA-DUM
LIVE
BA-DUM
KSHANG
BA-DUM
JIRO INUZUKA...
I'M THE ONE...
...WHO'S GONNA...
BA-DUM
WHAT'S WRONG, YOUNG'UN?
IS AN ASSISTOR AFRAID OF AN OLD CODGER LIKE ME?

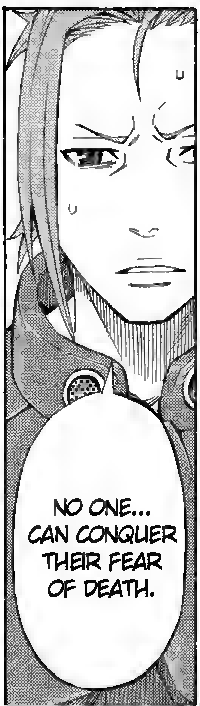
YOU... YOU KNOW YOU'LL LIKELY BE KILLED BY ME.
SO WH-WHY? WHY ARE YOU SO CALM?
WHAT'S GOING ON?

SORRY, KID.
I DON'T THINK MY OLD BONES CAN HANDLE...
...THAT KIND OF STUNT.


DO YOU THINK YOU CAN FELL ME--
DO I LOOK LIKE I CAN PULL THAT OFF?

NO, SON...
THIS IS A LITTLE DIFFERENT.

!?


NO ONE... CAN CONQUER THEIR FEAR OF DEATH.

HOWEVER... ONCE I KNEW THE DAY WAS HERE....
...I COULDN'T MUSTER THE URGE TO RESIST. MUCH LIKE THE OTHERS WHO WERE LED TO THEIR DEATHS.

I CAN'T FIND THE EXACT WORDS, BUT...
...I FEEL LIKE I DON'T WANT TO DIE A LAUGHING-STOCK.
IT MAY BE A SPUR-OF-THE-MOMENT KIND OF THING, BUT...
IT'S PROBABLY WHEN I CAME TO TERMS WITH MY IMPENDING DEATH.
...THAT IN THESE FINAL MOMENTS, I'D CHOOSE PRIDE OVER LIFE.
I'M HONESTLY SURPRISED, THOUGH...
SHUFF
STILL WANNA CHAT WITH THIS OLD MAN?
SHUFF
...SO WHAT'S THE MATTER?
...
...
...

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?! KILL HIM RIGHT NOW!!
LIVE
TH-THOSE TWO KIDS YOU KILLED! YOUR PRIDE KILLED THEM, Y'KNOW !!
DAMMIT! STAY AWAY!
STAY AWAY FROM ME!!
THOSE MURDERS YOU COMMITTED...
COMPARING YOUR OWN DOG'S LIFE...
...TO HUMANS ...!
LOG
PAUSE
!

...WHEN I HAD A SEIZURE.
WHIIIINE
WOOF?!
ALL TARO TRIED TO DO WAS HELP ME...
...WAS JUST TO TELL SOME-ONE WHAT HAPPENED TO ME.
ALL THAT DES-PERATE BARKING HE DID...
TRIED TO HELP YOU?!
!
!
WOOF
WOOF
WOOF
WOOF
WOOF
BUT HE HAPPENED TO RUN ACROSS TWO DRUNK BRATS...
WHAT THE HELL'S UP WITH THIS MUTT?!

YANK
GRAB
AW, HELL YEAH, THIS FEELS AWE-SOME !!
YOU AIN'T GOING NO-WHERE !!
WARK ?!
EAT THIS !!
WE GOTTA TEACH THIS LITTLE PUNK THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US HUMANS AND THESE BEASTS.
SURE THING.
HEY NOBU, YOU GIVE IT A SHOT!
BEER
TARO!!
TARO!!
CRACK
YEH HAH! HAH! HAH!
YARK !!
YARK !!
POW
HUFF
HUFF

THOSE TWO WERE LAUGHING, AS IF IT WAS ALL A GAME...
.....
TOYING WITH TARO'S LIFE!!
I TRIED TO MAKE MY CASE TO THE AUTHORITIES, BUT...
...TARO'S KILLING WAS INTERPRETED AS SELF-DEFENSE.
SO WHAT IS A DOG'S LIFE, THEN?
...BUT... STILL...

...TARO COULD SPEAK LIKE A HUMAN?
...THEN WHAT IF...
...YOU'RE STILL TALKING ABOUT...
...IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A DOG AND A HUMAN!!
ALL YOU ENFORCERS LOOK AT...
BUT THEY ARE BOTH LIVES!!
...HUMAN LIFE HERE...

HE'S ALL THAT'S LEFT...
TARO WAS ALL THAT'S LEFT OF MY FAMILY !!
...OF MY WHOLE LIFE!!

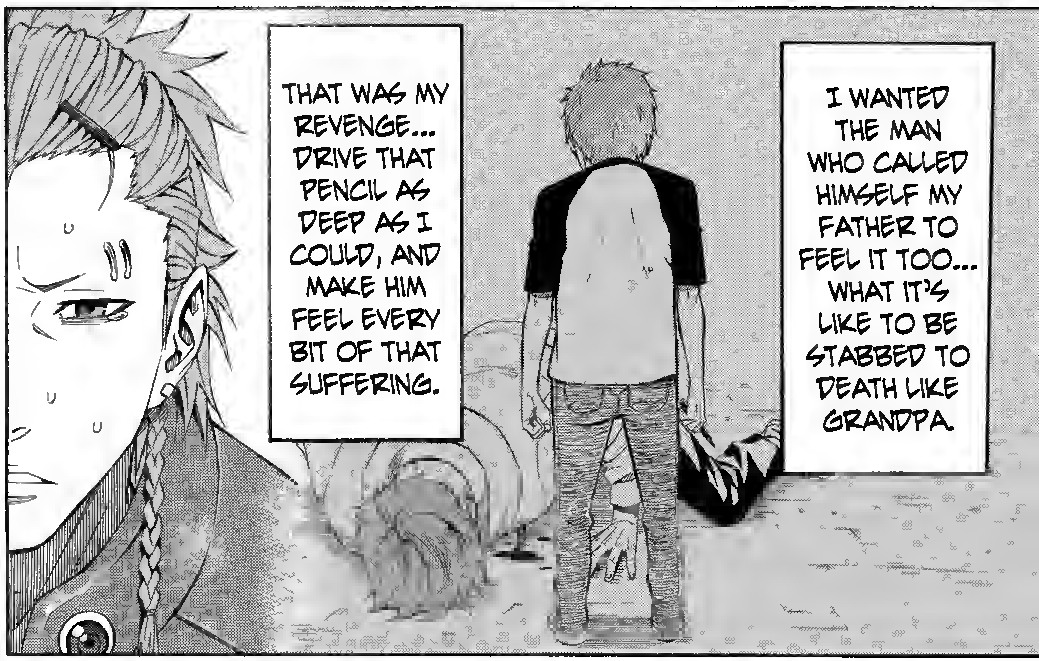
NOTHING'LL SCARE ME ONCE I GROW UP.
WHAT'S UP? ANOTHER BAD DREAM OR SOMETHING?
ズズン SNIFFLE
WH-WHAT IS IT?
IT'S SCARIER THAN YOUR GRANNY WHEN SHE WAS ALIVE. IT'S EVEN SCARIER THAN DYING.
ERK
YOU KNOW, I'M ACTUALLY SCARED OF SOMETHING RIGHT NOW.
HEH... SURE THING, KID.
HUH?
IT'S LOSING YOU, SILLY.

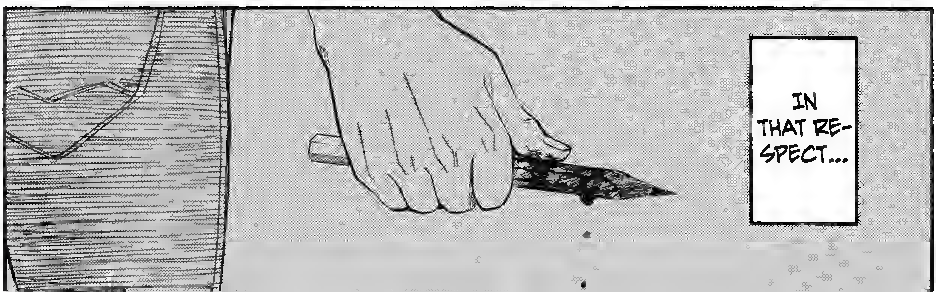
YOU'RE MY ONLY FAMILY NOW, KOLITA.
WIPE
WIPE
THAT MAKES YOU MY WHOLE LIFE.

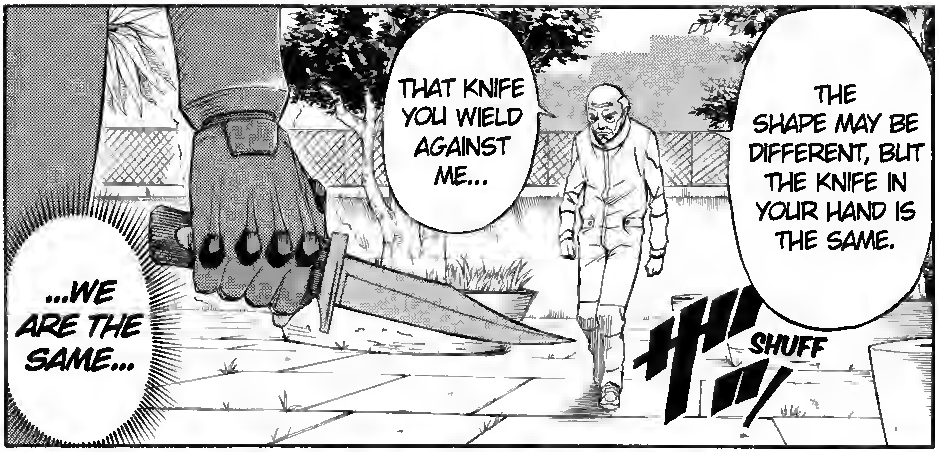
MY LIFE IS... YOUR LIFE?
I DON'T GET IT.
IS THIS ALSO THAT THING YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT?

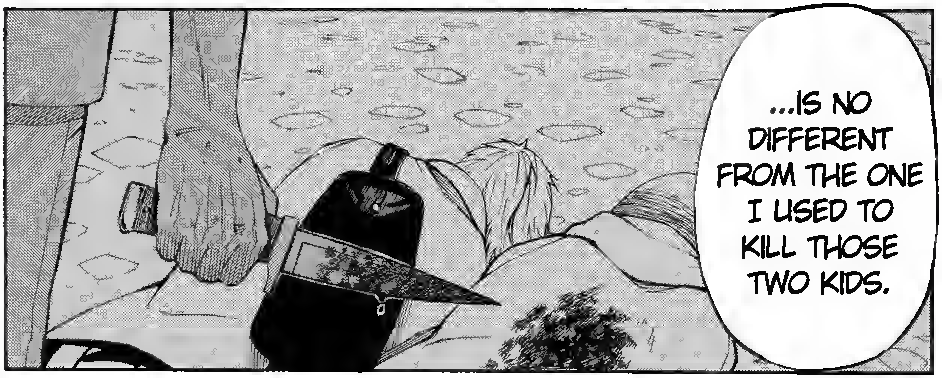
THAT... "EMPATHIZE" THING?

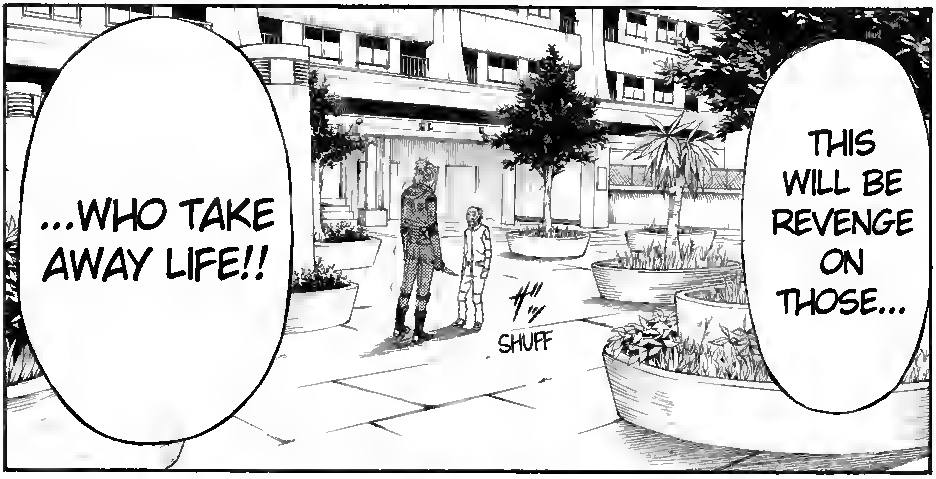
THEY STOLE LIFE AS IF IT WERE GAME.
SO I WANTED THOSE KIDS TO FEEL IT TOO...
...THE ABSURDITY BEHIND A SUDDEN DEATH... AND THE PAIN OF HAVING YOUR BONDS SUDDENLY SEVERED.

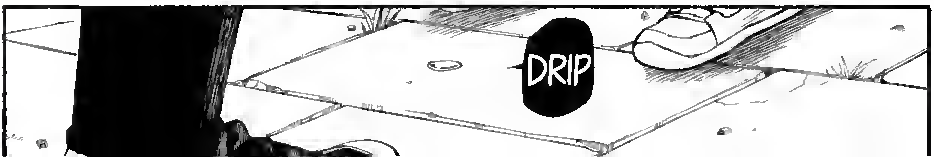

I WANTED THE MAN WHO CALLED HIMSELF MY FATHER TO FEEL IT TOO... WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE STABBED TO DEATH LIKE GRANDPA.
THAT WAS MY REVENGE... DRIVE THAT PENCIL AS DEEP AS I COULD, AND MAKE HIM FEEL EVERY BIT OF THAT SUFFERING.


IN THAT RE-SPECT...

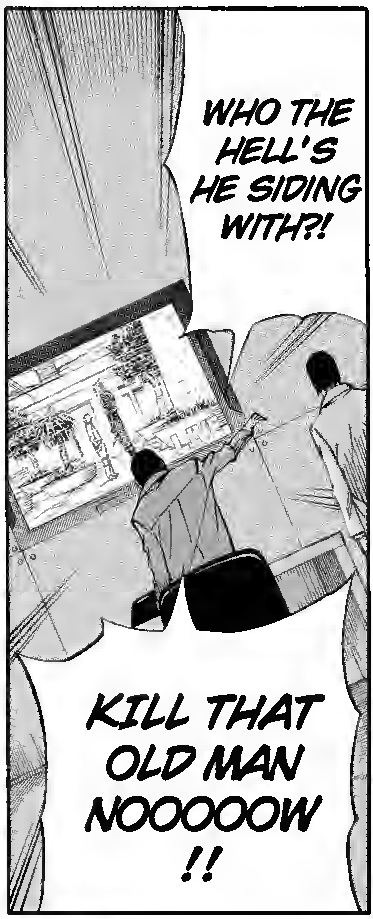

THAT KNIFE YOU WIELD AGAINST ME...
THE SHAPE MAY BE DIFFERENT, BUT THE KNIFE IN YOUR HAND IS THE SAME.
...WE ARE THE SAME...
SHUFF


...IS NO DIFFERENT FROM THE ONE I USED TO KILL THOSE TWO KIDS.


...WHO TAKE AWAY LIFE!!
SHUFF
THIS WILL BE REVENGE ON THOSE...


DRIP

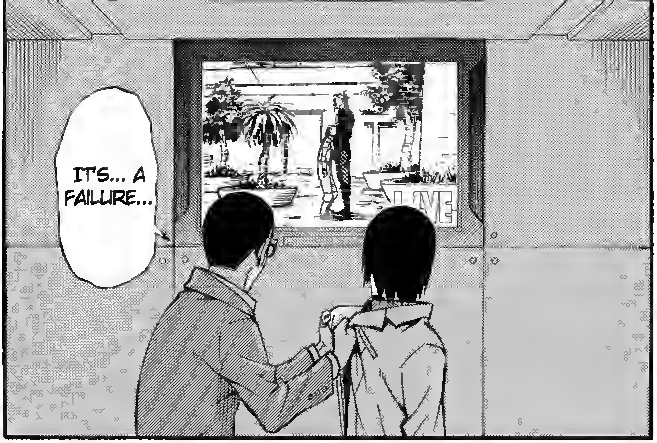
SLAM
YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDD-ING ME!!


WHO THE HELL'S HE SIDING WITH?!
KILL THAT OLD MAN NOOOOOW !!

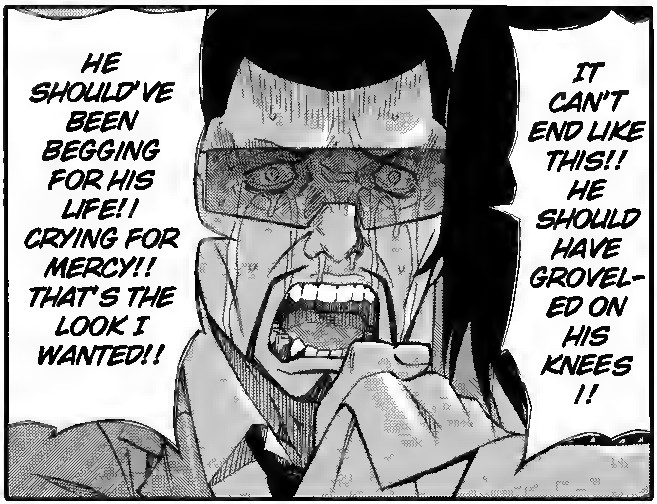
THIS MAN AND I...
...WERE ONE AND THE SAME!!

...ASSIST YOU!!
助太刀
Sukedachi
...CAN'T DO IT...
I CANNOT...
!!
THOKK
GRAB
WHAT'S HIS PROB-LEM?!
IS THIS ALL YOU'RE GOOD FOR?!
IS THIS WHAT THE ASSIS-TORS ARE ABOUT ?!

SPLORTCH
NO ...!
MY HAND ?!
...TO... I... NEED...
TARO'S... BEEN... WAITING... FOR ME...
... OTHER... SIDE...
...ON... THE...
HUH.


IT'S... A FAILURE...

THIS EXECUTION'S A FAILURE!!
HE WASN'T EXECUTED AT ALL! HE COMMITTED SUICIDE!!

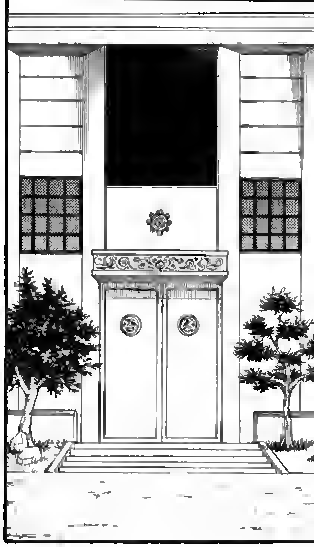

IT CAN'T END LIKE THIS!! HE SHOULD HAVE GROVELED ON HIS KNEES!!
HE SHOULD'VE BEEN BEGGING FOR HIS LIFE!! CRYING FOR MERCY!! THAT'S THE LOOK I WANTED!!

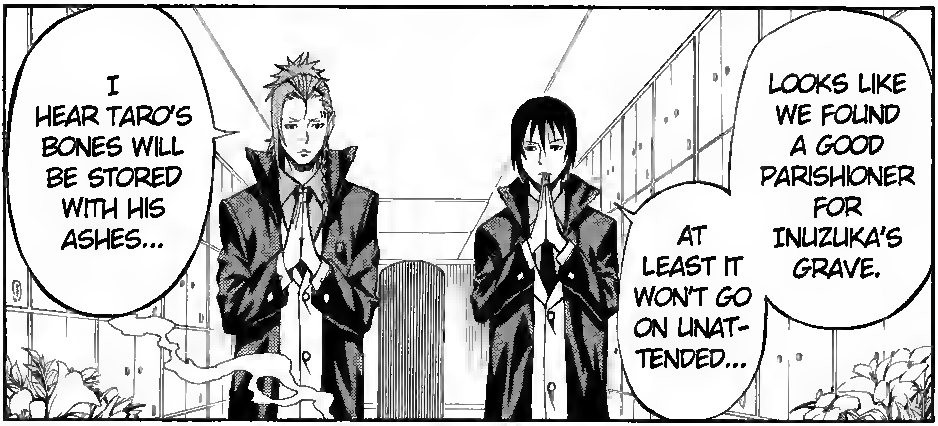
UAAAA AAAAA AAHH!!

DON'T YOU REALIZE IT YET, SIR?
.....
HE SHOULD HAVE SUFFERED ...!
THE PAIN... WHEN YOUR BONDS ARE SEVERED... SO SUDDENLY...!
HE NEEDS TO SUFFER...! THE PAIN OF LOSING FAMILY...!
...ECHOED INUZUKA'S SENTIMENTS COMPLETELY.
WHAT YOU SAID JUST NOW...

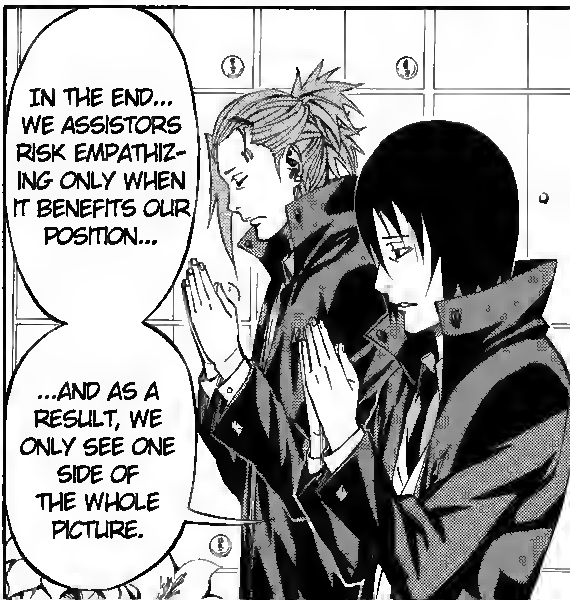
GOD...
HGH-GH...
DAMM-IIIII-IIIIT!!!
THE ASSISTOR HAS NOT BEEN FELLED...

助太刀
Sakedachi
THIS EXECUTION HAS BEEN COMPLETED WITHOUT INCIDENT.




I HEAR TARO'S BONES WILL BE STORED WITH HIS ASHES...
AT LEAST IT WON'T GO ON UNATTENDED...
LOOKS LIKE WE FOUND A GOOD PARISHIONER FOR INUZUKA'S GRAVE.

CAPTAIN ODA...
...PROBABLY WANTED YOU TO REALIZE THAT.
.....


IN THE END... WE ASSISTORS RISK EMPATHIZING ONLY WHEN IT BENEFITS OUR POSITION...
...AND AS A RESULT, WE ONLY SEE ONE SIDE OF THE WHOLE PICTURE.

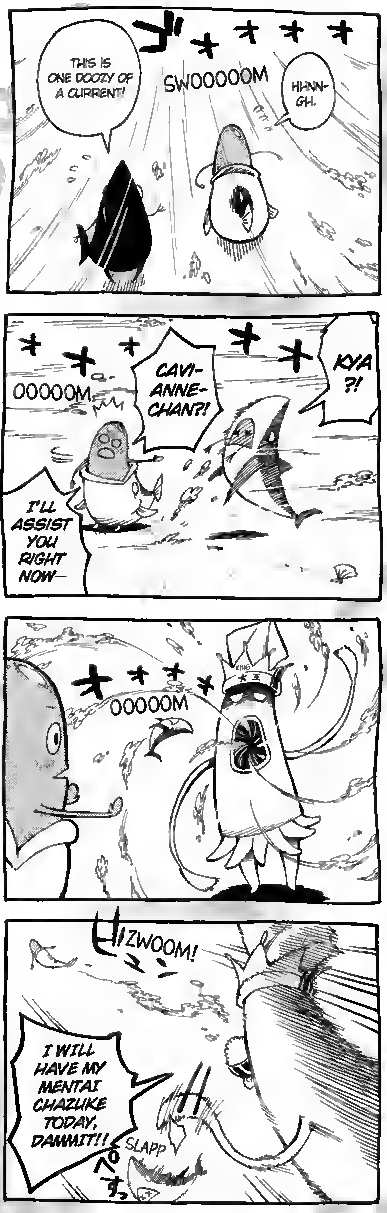
KOUTA... I FINALLY GET TO HUG YOU...
IT'S DADDY, SON...
...DOESN'T HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BE AN ASSIS—
...A CRYBABY LIKE ME...
PLIP PLIP
--TOR--
SLAPP
--OWW !!

YOUR TEARS ARE PROOF THAT YOU'VE BEEN SHOULDERING A HEAVY, HEAVY BURDEN.
IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN NO MATTER WHO YOU SHED YOUR TEARS FOR...
犬井院天太次絆屋
...YOU WON'T BE SHEDDING THEM FOR THE WRONG REA-SONS.
I'M CERTAIN OF IT NOW.
SOBB
SCHNIFF
SEN-PAIIII...

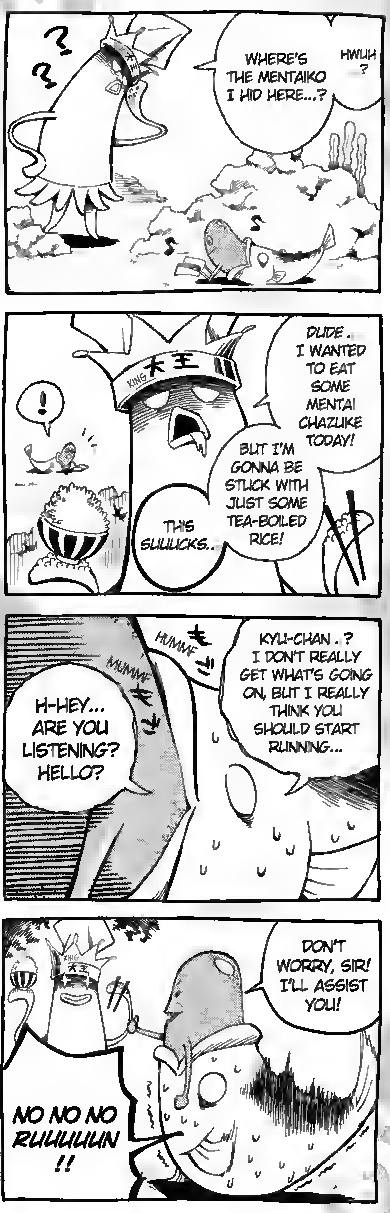
YOU'VE GOT SNOT ALL OVER!! LEGGO !!
EEYU-GH!!
YESSIR !!
GRASP

SUKEDACHI 09 (VOL.2) END

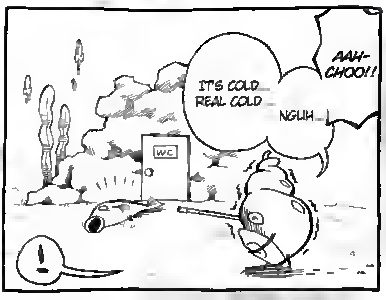
A POOR CATCH

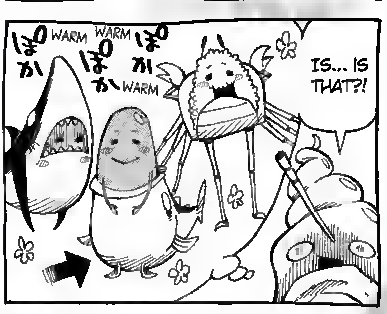


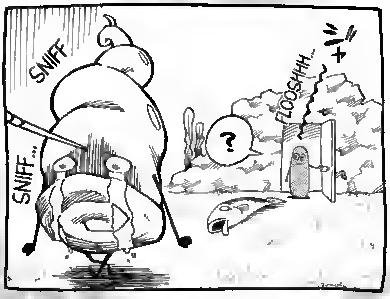
MENTAI CHAZUKE


WHERE'S THE MENTAIKO I HID HERE...?
HWUH ?
KING
DUDE.. I WANTED TO EAT SOME MENTAI CHAZUKE TODAY!
BUT I'M GONNA BE STUCK WITH JUST SOME TEA-BOILED RICE!
THIS SUUUCKS..
HUMMF
KYU-CHAN.? I DON'T REALLY GET WHAT'S GOING ON, BUT I REALLY THINK YOU SHOULD START RUNNING...
H-HEY... ARE YOU LISTENING? HELLO?
DON'T WORRY, SIR! I'LL ASSIST YOU!
NO NO NO RUUUUUUN !!

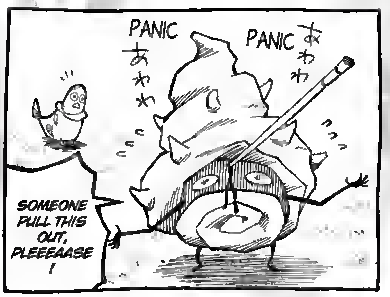
A NEW HOME

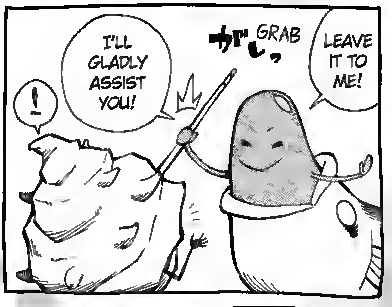


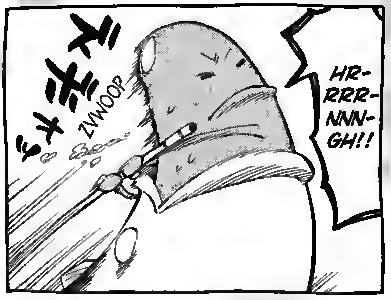


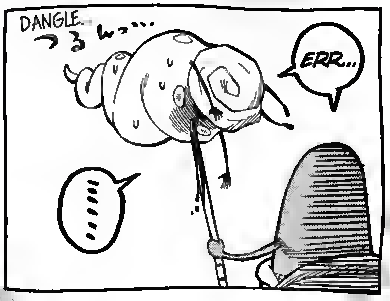


TSUBOYAKI-KUN









NEXT : 助太刀09
SUKEDACHI 09
YUKI'S HARROWING PAST IS REVEALED...
SO... THAT'S WHAT "RED" IS...
WHAT ACTION DOES KOUTA TAKE...?!
OH... SO THAT'S WHERE YOU WERE MILADY.
I SAID IT WAS TIME FOR DINNER.
THIS SMELL... IS SCARY!!!
AND...
IF THE ETALIATION INVOLVED STABBING ND SHARP BJECTS...
FORMER MD YOSHIHIKO HAGIWARA, FOLKS.
THE PAST OF THE ASSISTOR HAGIWARA "THE MAD DOCTOR" WILL BE REVEALED...!!
助太刀09
※ THE PAGE IS TAKEN STRAIGHT FROM THE FAUNE'S FEST PUBLICATION
VOLUME THREE!!
IN STORES NOVEMBER 21, 2015!!
KEEP OUT

SUKEDACHI NINE
助太刀09

INNER JACKET

COMMENT

岸本聖史
SEISHI KISHIMOTO

Even in the office, my three Assistors are always assisting me ~~with my video games~~ with my manga!

※THIS INNER JACKET WAS INCLUDED WITH THE TANKOBON EDITION WHEN IT WAS FIRST SOLD.

COVER PAGE

[FAMILY]

A group unit consisting of parents and their offspring in cohabitation. Are beloved pet dogs not included in the [illegible]? It's hard to draw distinct boundaries in that debate. Death Inmate Inuzuka tried to draw that line, exacting "revenge for family" by murdering the two young men who killed his pet [illegible].

[THE TRUTH]

A fact or statement that is unobscured by falsehoods. "The truth"? The truth changes when you change how it is. However, if you do not betray your feelings, then "the truth" will just shift itself in response to those feelings. Haruka Yanase [illegible] to wage her battles with that "truth" through her journalism.

[LIES]

A falsehood uttered to fool others, or a falsehood that [illegible] the truth. A lie told for one's own benefit will warp one's [illegible] the facts and create tragedy. However, there may be times [illegible] need to be made for the salvation of others. Such was the [illegible] the Assistor Hachiba, who wished to hide the truth of his death [illegible] that he could remain the bright spot in the victims' lives.

[MURDER WEAPON]

Tools used to kill others. Many tools like knives and guns – and [illegible] in general – have been used as examples. Murder weapons used [illegible] victims are employed in retaliations. However, it is humans who [illegible] the tools that become murder weapons; it is also humans who [illegible] them.

[ADVOCATES AGAINST RETALIATION]

Those who are against the Death by Retaliation Act. Among [illegible] people are extremists who have established an organization, [illegible] conduct acts of terror to hinder and halt executions altogether. One tragedy has occurred as a result of such acts...

[AMNESTY]

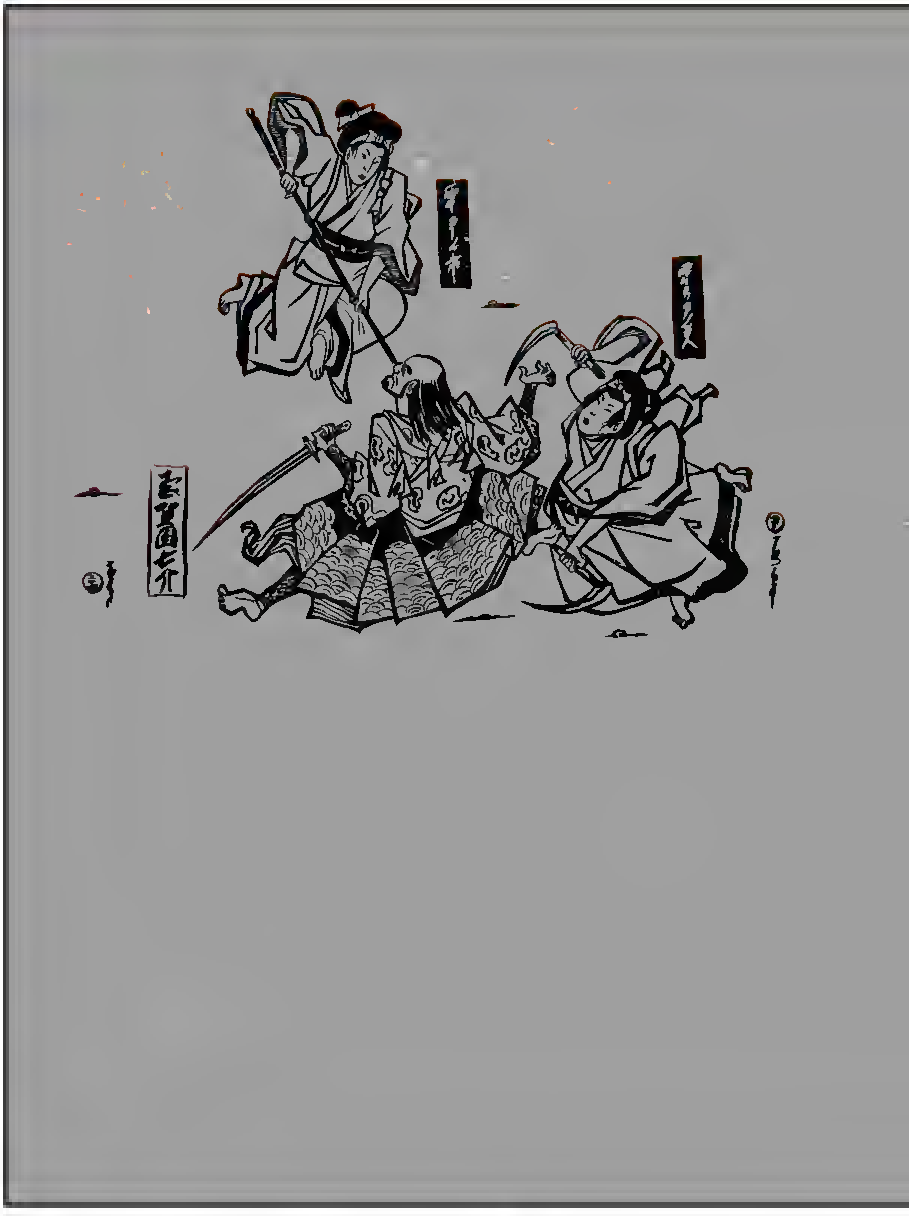
One of a few special rights granted to a death row inmate who [illegible] succeeds in felling an Assistor. These rights exist to prevent [illegible] inmates from committing grievous harm upon themselves before [illegible] an execution. Inmates spend three years at a special facility, [illegible] where they are guaranteed a basic daily existence. However, [illegible] they are never free to step beyond the facility's boundaries...

[EUTHANASIA]

One of a few special rights granted to a death row inmate who [illegible] succeeds in felling an Assistor. These rights exist to prevent [illegible] inmates from committing grievous harm upon themselves before [illegible] an execution. After spending three years at a special facility, [illegible] are given a soft execution via lethal drugs. Inmates struggle against the Assistors in order to gain a painless death.

[FELLING AN ASSISTOR]

When an Assistor is killed during an execution, thus ending the retaliation in failure. Inmates who succeed in felling an Assistor are granted three years' amnesty and a soft execution, [illegible] say that one Assistor had been felled in the past...



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BACK COVER

THE LIFE THAT'S SNUFFED OUT IN A MURDER ISN'T JUST THE VICTIM'S... THE WHOLE FAMILY'S LIVES VANISH ALONG WITH THE VICTIM'S AS WELL...
Bearing a deep hatred towards crime, the 'assistors' carry out executions in place of victims and their families under the curtain of law. Yuuji's friend Nanao found herself in a desperate situation, captured by a woman bearing a grudge against the media over an old magazine article... And lastly, Chapter 3 and 4 as told from the viewpoint of Kaoru, from his inclusion into the assistors to his first execution... all here on volume 2!

※THIS BACK COVER WAS INCLUDED WITH THE TANKOBON EDITION WHEN IT WAS FIRST SOLD.

Extra Contents END

English Digital Edition
Chapter 010

Sukedachi 09
助太刀09
Seishi Kishimoto

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